

# SLOVAKIA

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## IN THIS ISSUE:

R. I. P. Dr. Francis Hrušovský

Monsignor Jozef Tiso — Controversial Personality

Czecho-Slovakia or Czechoslovakia?

Štúr and the Slovak Independence Movement

Beneš and the Communization of Czecho-Slovakia

~~Masaryk's Democracy and Slovakia~~

Why Did Beneš Resign in 1938?

Memorandum

The History of Slovakia

1856 — Dr. Samuel Czambel — 1956

Castles of Slovakia: Starohrad (The Old Castle) of Liptov

Kerner's "Czechoslovakia" (Cont'd.): History or Propaganda?

WHO SAID IT: 24, 39, 54, 58, 62, 87

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As Americans, members of the Slovak League of America firmly believe that the Slovak nation, just as all nations, has an inherent and God-given right to freedom and independence. They are dedicated to the cause of the American way of life, Slovak freedom and world peace and are determined to oppose the plague of Communism and all other totalitarian political systems.

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## SLOVAKIA AND THE RECENT REBELLIONS

Whatever happened and is happening in Poland, Hungary, the Middle East, and other countries of Europe and Asia must be blamed on the policies followed by the western democracies, on the so many "wise men" from the West, who knew how to win another war, but could not win an honorable and just peace.

The press has done a little to help the situation; and intelligence agencies of our Government did even less to clarify it. We always had and still have our embassies, employing hundreds of thousands of people, in the many countries of Europe and Asia, but still do not know the nations thereof sufficiently well to work with them effectively in the interests of genuine democracy. The Poles, we are supposed to believe, would be satisfied with Gomulka Communism, the Yugoslavs like the "Tito" brand, while the Slovaks go for the Czech type of the late Dr. Edward Beneš. Nothing could be farther from the truth: all these nations pray fervently that they might be liberated speedily from the scourge of godless, materialistic Communism which was forced upon them during and after World War II.

Much has been said and written recently about the disturbances in Poland and Hungary, but little or nothing about what is going on in Slovakia. But the fact

is that Slovakia is not and never will be satisfied with the situation it was forced into after World War II against the will of her people. The Slovaks proved it on many occasions. And they did it again during 1956. The students of Slovakia demonstrated in May; this was followed by Poznan in Poland in June; then Hungary rebelled in October, and Poland again was heard from. What was the situation in Slovakia when open rebellion broke out in Budapest on October 23?

Several Slovak escapees said that the Czech Red Army immediately sealed the Slovak-Hungarian border to prevent Slovaks from helping the Magyars; Czech "security police" and the Czech Army occupied all of Slovakia; all former Slovak deputies, ministers of government, and political leaders were rounded up as "unreliable elements" and shipped to Bohemia and Moravia. Even Gustav Husák, Slovak Red leader, was transferred from a Slovak jail to one in Czech territory. The Prague Ministry of Defense ousted all Slovak officers from Lt. Col. up from the "Czechoslovak" Army and replaced Slovak militia in factories by Czech workers' militia.

The Slovaks sympathized with the Magyars and helped as much as they could under the most difficult circumstances. Thousands of Slovaks and Magyars from Slova-

kia joined the Hungarian patriots to help shake off the halter of Moscow. Lively demonstrations against the Soviets and the Czechs were staged in Bratislava, Šurany, Nové Zámky, Lučenec, Košice, and other Slovak towns. They destroyed large sections of track to hinder the movement of Red soldiers and supplies through Slovakia; heavy fighting took place near Prešov. Demonstrating in Bratislava, October 27, students shouted: "Freedom for Hungary — Freedom for Slovakia — Get out Russians — Go home Czechs — No more Czecho-Slovakia — Down with the Reds," etc.

The Czechs took no chances with the Slovaks; they knew that the sentiment in Slovakia was not only strongly anti-Communist and anti-Soviet, but also strongly anti-Czech. As one Slovak escapee, who witnessed the disturbances in Bratislava, put it: "Since the execution of President Tiso, the sentiment in Slovakia was never so anti-Soviet, anti-Communist, and anti-Czech as it is now."

During the Magyar revolt Slovakia resembled a large military camp; the streets of Bratislava were full of tanks, all roads were blocked by the Czech Army, and machine-gun nests were planted everywhere. Bratislava was the alleged headquarters of both the Soviet and Magyar Reds: the latter were quartered in Hotel Carlton, the former in Hotel Devín. Both hotels were heavily guarded, as were all public buildings. All Slovak reserves were called into service, but were not allowed to serve in Slovakia; they were shipped to Moravia and Bohemia,

while Czech reserves served with the army in Slovakia.

A second Slovak escapee wrote: "Twenty-two Soviet divisions came into Hungary many of them through Slovakia. Besides that a special Czech military unit of five divisions operated in the Košice-Miškovec area.... Controls are very strict.... Border guards have been tripled; they shoot at practically anyone not in uniform."

Reporters and writers for the world press still do not distinguish between Slovakia and Bohemia, the Slovaks and the Czechs: they write about the "Hungarian-Czechoslovak" frontier, when they actually mean the "Hungarian-Slovak" frontier; for them the Red Czech Army becomes the "Czechoslovak" Army. The Slovaks, it seems, are bound to be involved in everything the Czechs do since the birth of the political monstrosity known as Czecho-Slovakia.

To keep the record straight, allow us to remind all uninformed, misinformed and "slightly" confused writers, and the reading public that: the Slovaks are not Czechs; Slovakia is not Bohemia; so-called "Czecho-Slovak" policy is strictly Czech policy; the Slovaks outlawed Communism in their Republic in 1939, while the Czechs under Beneš would not govern without them; the Slovaks were and still are anti-Soviet, while the Czechs under Masaryk and Beneš, Gottwald and Zápotocký, were and still are pro-Soviet; the Slovaks sympathized with the Hungarian "rebels" and helped them as much as they could under the circumstances, while the Czechs collaborated with the Soviet armies to crush the Magyar revolt.

R. I. P.

**Dr. Francis Hrušovský**

Joseph Kirschbaum, LL.D., Ph.D.

Thousands of Slovaks living on this side of the Iron Curtain were stunned by the unexpected news which broke the night of September 9. It struck them as an incredible report, this word announcing the sudden death of Dr. Francis Hrušovský, president of the Slovak National Council Abroad, outstanding patriot, eminent historian and educator, and a man of sterling moral caliber. Among prominent representatives of a Slovak generation, to which it was given to see their cherished dream of Slovakia's independence and statehood fulfilled only to be ruthlessly destroyed within a few years. Dr. Hrušovský personified the best traditions and characteristics which distinguish our Slovak intellectuals, men of a class that is being mercilessly hounded to extermination by the Communists.

The loss of Dr. Hrušovský is very keenly felt both because of what he was per se and because of what he meant to the nation. And it is precisely these two reasons that quicken the realization that no blow could have been more grievous in our ranks than this death of Dr. Hrušovský which so sorely afflicts all our Slovak communities in the free world and especially affects all Slovak émigrés dedicated to the vindication of Slovakia's liberation from foreign rule.

It has been our unhappy lot to suffer three irreparable losses within the span of three consecutive years: the passing of Karol Sidor, diplomat, statesman and key leader of the Slovak exile movement; the political assassination of Matúš Černák, a most valuable force among Slovak exiles in Germany, and now the death of Dr. Hrušovský, Sidor's successor, in the prime of his career at the age of 53.

One short year ago, when Dr. Hrušovský accepted the chief executive responsibilities of the Slovak National Council Abroad, we rejoiced in being under his capable leadership. We confidently fixed all our prospects on him

as being the individual best qualified to effect a united effort of all Slovak exiled groups engaged in the struggle to attain Slovakia's justified liberation and independence. Mild-mannered and unassuming as he was, Dr. Hrušovský commanded the respect of all Slovaks. His personal inclination and preference were not for the tensions and stratagems of a political career but he did not decline wholehearted service to his nation in this difficult post, when it was evident that the need of the hour required it of him.

The Cleveland weekly "Slovak News" wrote of him: "In less than a decade in his adopted country he became a beloved figure in Slovak circles everywhere. Everyone who met him was impressed by his personality. Those who knew him learned to admire his scholarship, to respect his unwavering devotion to principles, and to love him for his boundless charity. Seldom can one expect to meet a man of his moral stature, dignity, idealism, and faith."

The primary interest of Dr. Hrušovský's life was teaching, specifically the teaching of history and the pursuit of historical research. His innate love of his people and his instinctive devotion to youth prompted him to choose education as his profession. He attained distinction in this field, and it was as an educator and a historian that he entered the political arena. Here he looked upon all his political functions and commitments as a service to his nation's highest interests and, hence, worked with a sense of dedication to public duty.

Specializing as he did in medieval history, Dr. Hrušovský published several fully documented studies on Great Moravia, the first Slovak and Slav state on the Danube. He also prepared a Slovak history text for secondary schools which established a precedent in the Slovak publishing world. In its second edition this book was welcomed with such wide acclaim that it became a national best seller.

In the early part of his exile, during his sojourn in Rome and in the United States, Dr. Hrušovský prepared a scholarly work on the earliest Slovak rulers and an exhaustive study investigating the relations of the Slovak rulers of Great Moravia with the Holy See.



Slovak letters, as well as American Slovak history, were definitely enriched by Dr. Hrušovský's book surveying the growth and expansion of Slovak religious orders in the United States. This book incidentally develops a great deal of the cultural history of American citizens of Slovak descent.

Besides these book length productions, Dr. Hrušovský has to his credit hundreds of articles and numerous addresses delivered on various occasions.

Reflecting on some of these merits of Dr. Hrušovský, we find that our sentiments, too, correspond with the expression of one of the prominent American leaders in Slovak cultural life who said with deepest sincerity that we "will miss his wise guidance, his great capacity for work, and his unfaltering hope of a better world on the morrow."

All true Slovaks on both sides of the Iron Curtain bear with pain the loss of Dr. Hrušovský. Our one comfort and consolation stems from the belief that national leaders of Dr. Hrušovský's moral stature and defenders of a nation's rights and liberties share the prerogative of great soldiers who never die.

Thus, indeed, will Dr. Hrušovský continue to live, partaking of an immortality among us, his courage, his vision, his selflessness serving as an undying example for coming generations of Slovaks, inspiring them to win for their country that freedom, that independent and recognized state for which Hrušovský worked literally to his last breath.

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### **DR. FRANCIS HRUŠOVSKÝ — THE MAN**

Constantine Čulen

Francis Hrušovský was eminently an historian. He could have distinguished himself by a career at the University of Bratislava even under the tutelage of the Czech professor Chaloupecký. The professor was aware that this young collegian's views were radically opposed to his own outlook, nevertheless entertained high esteem for him. It was something which Hrušovský merited because of his consistent gravity, his critical acumen, and his broad knowledge. But

on completing his university training, Hrušovský decided on a different course of life.

There happened to be a vacancy for the headmaster-ship at the Catholic Slovak high school or gymnázium at Kláštor pod Znievom and Hrušovský chose to apply for the post. It was not considered an enviable position by reason of the fact that the institution was burdened with financial difficulties and very often the first of the month found the administration really straitened about meeting the payroll. Moreover, the school faced an expansion program which complicated financial matters to an even greater degree. Nevertheless, Hrušovský did not decide on the assured security and prestige of a university chair in preference to this position which was less rewarding in material values. He became the school's director and made of it the intellectual center which Bishop Štefan Moyses, its founder, had hoped it would once become.

This particular gymnázium was the only institution which bore upon its facade the inscription "SLOVENSKÉ GYMNAZIUM (SLOVAK GYMNAZIUM); all other similar schools were inscribed as "CZECHO-SLOVAK." It is not clear just how this detail escaped the notice of the civic authorities at the time, but the point is that Dr. Hrušovský was singularly proud of such a distinctive designation of his school. And it was, in reality, the only genuine SLOVAK gymnázium, not merely in name, but also in spirit and in purpose.

It was my privilege to go there often. And each visit proved to me a more refreshing experience. Perhaps there had never yet been as demanding a headmaster as was Hrušovský, but certainly there never yet was one who had been so universally loved and respected "Pán direktor" — that was his title; it was a designation or an appellation by which we understood without question and immediately that the reference was to Dr. Hrušovský and to him alone.

The greatest penalty meted out to an unhappy offender was to hear from pán direktor no word about the transgression. Once I happened to be in his school office with him when a student approached with an explanation and apology.

"Did I say anything to you?" said pán direktor to the offender in a tone of voice which betrayed no warmth. "Well, that's just it, pán direktor; that's the point. You said not a word," the student complained.

Even here, in immigration, his former students often sought out their pán direktor. The confidently referred to him for counsel and always parted from him strengthened and imbued with resolution. Hrušovský never recommended inconsiderate or rash and merely contentious conflict, he did encourage vigorous effort and endorsed even justified force that was deliberate and purposeful.

Hrušovský was one of the most highly regarded members of the Parliament of the Slovak Republic (1938-1945). We happened to serve together on various committees. I learned that he looked even upon current problems with the disposition of a serious historian, and it was especially in our committee sessions that a comparison of the past with the present helped to resolve our difficulties and to ease our tasks.

He was not given to frequent expression in Parliament but when he did speak, he delivered a speech that left a lasting impression. Although he was able to speak without prolonged preparation, he always took pains to prepare his parliamentary addresses with care. Every sentence, every word was selected for a specific purpose and a particular significance. These addresses are of such merit that one day they will be embodied in handbooks of public speaking as classic creations. The thought-content, as well as the delivery and all that was connected with these addresses, was thoroughly studied and weighed, I believe that I derogate from no one's merits of fame when I judge that Hrušovský was one of the best speakers of the Slovak nation within the past century.

Frequently Hrušovský was also the speaker of the day in villages and towns celebrating this or that occasion. Very many people must recall these celebrations with a deep sense of appreciation of his talents.

One of the interests of Dr. Hrušovský's special predilection was the Slovak Institute of Arts and Sciences (Matica

slovenská). As chairman of various science departments and as secretary of the history department of the Slovak Institute of Arts and Sciences, he contributed a great deal to the organization of scientific pursuits and undertakings in Slovakia. He was a real responsibility; he had accomplished much; but he still had a great deal of work planned. Even the very last evening of his life he discussed several long-standing projects which he hoped to realize some future day that would grant a happy return to his native land.

Recently a certain Slovak political leader who was engaged in conversation with Dr. Hrušovský remarked that at this point it was quite beyond him even to imagine a return to his former calling, absorbed as he had become with national politics. Dr. Hrušovský observed, "With me it is quite the contrary. What I can most readily imagine and what would give me the greatest satisfaction right at this moment would be to return to the teaching field at the gymnasium."

It was most natural and logical that on the death of Karol Sidor, Hrušovský should succeed to the presidency of the Slovak National Council Abroad. Never at home, and much less in exile, did he aspire to public office. In response to the insistence of his friends and colleagues, however, he finally yielded to this extent that he agreed to undertake whatever responsibilities the members of the SNCA should decide to entrust to him.

He conceived of this office as a service to the nation. Two days before his death we were occupied in discussion until midnight. When he became engrossed in the subject of Slovakia, his eyes shone brilliantly. He said that evening, and he repeated it with emphasis several times, that when our nation attains its freedom and independence, not one of us may presume pretensions to a privileged position at home. Our only duty, here in a new land which affords us liberty and the opportunity to live unshackled by the terror which dominates all life at home, is to devote ourselves to work for our nation. This is one of the most important convictions which each one of us must grasp. Anyone who would arrogate to himself special advantages or favors at home in re-



turn for his labor in exile is not welcome in our midst. On the other hand, he continued, qualified and deserving individuals will be fully appreciated at home in due time; they will be in demand, and there need be no apprehensions that any worthy individual will receive less than his due.

It behooves us all to be reasonable, non-extremist, and to do our utmost in behalf of the Slovak cause under extra-territorial circumstances.

This is the spirit in which Dr. Hrušovský dedicated himself to his nation throughout his whole life.

This article would be incomplete were I to omit recollections from Rome in the years 1945–1947. Those were trying times. We lived in constant danger of being overtaken and apprehended and committed to our foes. Terrific pressure was being put on Italian officialdom, but Italian authorities, sympathetic to our case because of Karol Sidor, withstood and resisted this pressure successfully.

Rome captured Hrušovský's heart. Day after day he frequented the Vatican library and devoted himself particularly to the study of the closest relationships between the Vatican and Slovakia. His finished work on this subject has already been published.

When it was not a jaunt to the library that he planned, we went out together, tramping the streets of Rome, touring its boulevards and market places, and visiting its shrines and churches. Hrušovský had so intimate a knowledge of ancient Roman villages and country sites that when he began to relate what happened in this or that locality, or how a place had distinguished itself, his listener lost all contact with time and became wholly unaware that planes roared in the sky, that trolleys jangled in the streets, that cars raced by. Lost in the spell of Hrušovský's words, one relived the glory of ancient days. Before one's eyes the Roman Empire came to life again. Hrušovský had a rare genius for creating this kind of atmosphere: It was this type of historical presentation that also held the key to his eminent success as a classroom lecturer. Just as in Rome he made Roman history live before our eyes, so did he regale his students in Slovakia with Slovak history.

Just as Ján Hollý over a hundred years ago captivated and instructed the followers of Štúr, so did Hrušovský inspire and educate his high school students at the gymnázium.

It was in this manner, too, that he held audiences spell-bound when he delivered occasional addresses at the various celebrations in Slovak villages and towns. That was his life; that was his life's work: to conjure an authentic image of the true greatness and the true glory of the distant past, to bridge the gap between the present and the past, and then to forecast and build a more prosperous Slovak future.

There is a very large number of Hrušovský's addresses and articles in which he developed the subject of Slovak statehood. There have been many opponents to Slovakia's aspirations to statehood, but not one of them has been able to foil or to refute the iron logic of Hrušovský's arguments in its favor.

In the past, the works of the most popular Slovak writers were published in editions running to several hundred copies. Never yet, however, did any Slovak book win such ready and such widespread popularity as did Hrušovský's "Slovenské Dejiny" (Slovak History). It was the first complete survey of our Slovak historical record. Prepared as it was by Dr. Hrušovský, the first Slovak historian of learning and of note, it presented to the Slovak nation a continuous reel of absorbing scenes from its past. We were all agreeably surprised when edition upon edition of his work was exhausted so that by 1945 when Hrušovský was leaving Slovakia, over one hundred thousand copies of this book were in the hands of the Slovak people. This volume of Hrušovský's history found its way even into homes where formerly hardly another book had been brought besides the prayer book and an infrequent almanac or annual.

Hrušovský's book was written in a style which had been so often recommended to us by Karol Sidor, who repeatedly reminded us to write clearly, simply, so that even unschooled parents in remote hamlets would have no difficulty in following and understanding what we wrote. That was its stylistic merit. In content, this history is

prepared with so scholarly an approach — with restraint, with fairmindedness, with an objective outlook — that it serves as a substantial refreshment for both the educated classes and for the less privileged.

With this volume, which the new regime proscribed in 1945, Hrušovský turned in Slovak national life so deep and so broad a furrow that no foreign usurpers can succeed in leveling it even in the course of years of effort. Even today reports from home reveal that this is the book which is still the most widely read Slovak work and the most frequently sought book in the black markets where, alas, an enormous number of Slovak writings are listed.

In the early part of 1945 it was rumored that Communist partisans captured and executed Hrušovský. Thank God that this was a false rumor. The partisans were defeated; they retreated and Hrušovský returned home. His first visit took him to Brestovany to see his mother. It is understandable that she embraced him warmly and held him close to her heart. Shortly after the exaltation of their meeting, however, she bravely reminded him: "For a great cause, it is a worthy thing even to die, my son -- and Slovak statehood is a great cause." Dr. Hrušovský often repeated these words, commenting: "Our peasant mothers embody much of the heroism of ancient Rome's noble matrons."

And now the noble heart of Francis Hrušovský has stilled its beating. He departed, mourned by a company of outstanding quinquagenarians who had worked with him toward a common goal in public life: Sidor, Černák, Jančí.

All were called by the Angel of Death at an age when a public servant usually attains the peak and the full development of his strength and activity. National leaders though they were, their hearts, so devoted to their nation, could not withstand the strain of the hour; they were overworked and exhausted. The burden of the yoke overtaxed their physical limitations, and their spark of life was crushed by it.

## DR. HRUŠOVSKÝ'S LAST COLUMN

(Prepared and sent to press by Dr. Hrušovský the day before he died; it appeared in the Cleveland weekly **SLOVAK NEWS** dated the day of his funeral, September 13.)

A number of our Slovak compatriots recently undertook a trip from America to Slovakia. They had waited a long time for an opportunity to visit with their parents who had often written their sons and daughters in America that they yearned for the comfort of at least one more visit together. Naturally, once they undertook the long voyage, the visitors hoped also to meet their other relatives and friends and to extend their travels to other parts of Slovakia.

Travel agencies dispatched all that was necessary and our Slovak friends set out from America within a few weeks or a few months. They left with the fond hope that they would spend at least a short stay beneath their family roof, that beloved home they had to leave a long time ago, and they looked forward to being in the circle of their dearest ones who expected them with open arms. Incidentally too, they were anxious to see for themselves in just what kind of circumstances their kin now live in Slovakia.

The Czecho-Slovak Communist boards which expedited these trips of our Slovak countrymen from the United States to Slovakia certainly did not do it in order to afford American Slovaks an opportunity to visit with their closest relatives. They did it because they covet American dollars which are very welcome even in Communistic countries and they hoped to persuade visitors from America that the Slovak people feel satisfied and happy under the current Red regime.

A Slovak lady from Cleveland made one of these trips to Slovakia. On arriving in Prague, she wrote a letter to her husband in America, describing how the American Slovak visitors were welcomed at the station with a playing band and with flowers. The elated husband made a full report to the editorial office of the Communistic paper



"Ludové Noviny" of Chicago, which in turn relayed to its readers the message that the Communists extend to Slovak visitors from America a signal welcome with music and bouquets.

The entire affair merely hides a ruse of the crafty Communists, an artifice which might mislead superficially-minded persons who return to their enslaved homeland. The implication is that the casual visitor to America is not pompously welcomed; he is not showered with flowers; he is not greeted with melody and song. But he comes into a free country; it is his privilege to move about at will anywhere from New York to San Francisco, to converse with whomever he wishes. He is at full liberty to form his own convictions about the life of free citizens living in a democracy, and he bases his conclusions and opinions on personal contacts, on firsthand impressions, and on unrestricted study.

The Communists are prepared to delude visitors from the first moment of their arrival at a railroad station or airport. They pay them a stirring march and send a coached committee of children to present flowers. They are meticulously solicitous about their guests; they take pains to point out whatever features will redound to their advantage or credit and they proceed along a studied plan to create a favorable impression and to lead their visitors to conclude that the American press is circulating untrue reports about Communist-controlled countries .

The Communists have made punctilious arrangements for the visits of our countrymen from America and their schedules of entertainment are nothing but a studied scheme of propaganda. One who is not sufficiently shrewd and discerning, who has not the faculty to see things with his own eyes as they really are and to formulate his own judgments with a nicety of discretion becomes the gullible victim of this Communistic propaganda program and accepts without question all this artificial glitter.

But there are and have been visitors to Slovakia who have no need of anyone's reception with floral tokens and music, who have no disposition to learn what the Com-

munists themselves wish to tell them. Accustomed to life in a free and democratic land, they look for this liberty and democracy in Slovakia. They draw comparisons between the life of a laborer in America and the lot of a worker in Slovakia. They hear what the Slovak peasants have to tell them, the sad experiences of men who have been despoiled of their property. They see for themselves how jaded Slovak women have become. They cannot fail to observe that the people are scantily clothed. They learn that it is extremely hard to make a living on the meager earnings that are realized, and at every step their convictions are confirmed that under Communistic domination there is no contentment, no prosperity, no paradise, none of those advantages and blessings which Communistic propaganda repeatedly and volubly advertises.

If guests from America are given the occasion to speak with their relatives in private, removed from the hearing of witnesses or spies, they are informed not only of the abject servitude imposed upon Slovakia, not only of her resistance to Communism, but also of the vital hope which sustains the Slovaks in the hope that liberty and independence will yet be granted to the country.

Who has eyes to see will not be blinded by flowers. Who has ears to hear will not be deafened by Communistic music. And he who has a rational mind for thinking will not become confused by Communist propaganda. Many Slovaks who return from Slovakia bring us reports which only confirm the fact that today Slovakia enjoys neither freedom nor democracy, because under Red rule only terror and misery and violence prevail. The Slovak people never accepted Communism; they will never become reconciled with it, and they only await the opportunity to throw off the despised yoke. And when they throw off this yoke, they will likewise throw off Czech domination, and Slovakia will again be an independent republic.

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THE SLOVAKS by Peter P. Yurchak, should be in every public library, in every college and university, in the home of every American of Slovak descent. Get your copy NOW. Paper bound copy — \$2.00; in cloth \$3.00.

## MONSIGNOR JOZEF TISO — CONTROVERSIAL PERSONALITY

By Th. J. Zubek, O.F.M., S.T.D.

The name of Msgr. Jozef Tiso, S.T.D., the executed president of the Slovak Republic, is generally known. However, his personality is not sufficiently recognized and understood in the Western world.

The concept of a priest as an active politician and high state functionary is today somewhat unusual in Western Europe, more so in the United States. Too, it is generally known that the standpoint of the Holy See is against Catholic priests actively engaging in political activity.

Moreover, certain groups present Msgr. Tiso as a disrupter of the Czecho-Slovak Republic, a traitor, Nazi, Quisling, and a lackey of Adolf Hitler. This is done solely for the political motives of presenting Slovaks, their political aspirations, and their leaders in an unfavorable light. It is not strange, then, that in the Western world the personality of Msgr. Tiso appears obscured, incomprehensible, controversial.

To reach a true understanding and evaluation of Jozef Tiso, it is necessary to look upon his personality and activities in the environment in which he lived and worked; it is necessary to delve more deeply into the inner man, into his motivations and ideological background.

### Slovak Clergy and Politics

The Slovak nation lived for many centuries in the Hungarian Kingdom. The awakening to national consciousness by the nations of Hungary brought about nationalistic struggles among these nations. The national consciousness of the Magyars, the leading nation in Hungary, culminated in the idea of a great Magyar state, politically, culturally and linguistically homogenous. The Magyars wished to Magyarize the non-Magyar nations of Hungary, namely, the Slovaks, Roumanians, Croats, and Germans.

The first victims of the forced Magyarization were

the Slovaks. The overwhelming majority of the intelligentsia of Slovak origin succumbed to Magyar pressure and followed the official Magyar line, for this was a prerequisite in the furtherance of one's career. Of the intelligentsia it was almost exclusively the clergy who remained loyal to the Slovak nation. The clergy became bearers of the Slovak populace with religious instruction and cultural and social enlightenment. They were Catholic priests and Lutheran ministers.

Outstanding among the priests were Anton Bernolak (1762-1813), formulator of the Slovak literary language; Juraj Fandly (1754-1810), social educator and popular writer on husbandry; Jan Holly (1785-1849), a poet who wrote heroic epics about the Slovak past; Bishop Stephen Moyses (1797-1869), founder and first president of the cultural institute, Matica Slovenska; Andrej Radlinsky (1818-1879), founder of St. Adalbert Society, a Catholic publishing house; Ferdis Juriga (1874-1953), an excellent orator and political leader,<sup>1</sup> and Andrej Hlinka, (1864-1938), a fiery defender of Slovak rights and founder of the Slovak People's Party.

Of the Lutheran ministers-patriots there were Michal M. Hodza (1811-1880) and Jozef M. Hurban (1817-1888), writers who organized and led the armed uprising of the Slovaks against the Magyars in 1948; Karol Kuzmany (1806-1866), poet and co-founder of the Matica Slovenska, and Martin Razus (1888-1937), poet and political leader.

Upon the basis of solidifying the Slovaks against Magyarization and fighting for their political and social rights, the clergy entered into the political life of Hungary.

### **Jozef Tiso in the Parliament at Prague**

When, in 1918, Slovakia became a part of the Czecho-Slovak Republic, it appeared at first that more favorable conditions would prevail for the Slovaks. However, it soon became apparent that the Czechs had much the same conceptions as the Magyars. The Czechs, too, dreamed of a great Czechoslovak national state, with a politically insignificant minority of Germans and Magyars. The Slovaks were to cede their national individuality and merge with



the Czechs to create a new Czechoslovak nationality and to become Czechs eventually.

The Slovaks, however, had long ago developed the consciousness of a distinct nationality and had no intention of ceding their national individuality in the interest of the Czechs. The Slovaks also felt the impact of the economic exploitation which the Czechs initiated immediately after 1918 when they practically made Slovakia their colony. It was almost impossible for a Slovak to enter civil service, since almost all civil positions and important economic functions in Slovakia were occupied by the Czechs. Further, the Slovaks, as a deeply religious Catholic nation (80%), resented the anti-religious acts of the Czechs, which were also provocatively perpetrated in Slovakia.

In the struggle against Czechization of the Slovaks and in defense of Slovak rights, the Slovak People's Party, founded and led by Msgr. Andrej Hlinka, took the lead. Hlinka and Juriga, even as they had fought Magyar machinations, began to fight Czech improprieties in the parliament at Prague, in the press, and through political campaigns among the people. The political platform of the Slovak People's Party was autonomy for Slovakia as guaranteed by the pact between American Slovaks and the representative of Czecho-Slovakia, Professor Thomas G. Masaryk, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1918. The Slovak People's Party with its program and motto, "For God and Nation," appealed to the feelings of the Slovak populace, and soon became the most important political party in Slovakia. The autonomistic program was also followed by the Slovak National Party of Martin Razus, a Lutheran minister.

From the beginning of Czecho-Slovakia (1918), Jozef Tiso, a young and zealous priest, spiritual director and professor at the diocesan seminary in Nitra, joined the autonomistic movement of Hlinka's Slovak People's Party. In 1925, Tiso became a member of the Czecho-Slovak parliament and then vice-president of the Slovak People's Party. When the Slovak People's Party entered the government, he became Minister of Health (1927-1929). Tiso

evolved soon into the staunchest exponent of Slovak autonomistic policies.

### **Tiso as President of the Slovak People's Party**

Andrej Hlinka died in August of the critical year of 1938. At that time the Slovak People's Party was the most powerful political group in Slovakia. It had in its ranks many young workers of the Slovak intelligentsia. None compared to Msgr. Tiso in moral and in political acumen and in experience. Commanding great esteem among the Slovak populace and clergy, Tiso logically became the successor of Msgr. Hlinka in the leadership of the Slovak People's Party.

Under the pressure of Hitler's drive, following Hlinka's death in 1938, events in Czecho-Slovakia and in Europe moved quickly. That which the Czechs were loathe to grant the Slovaks under normal conditions, they were forced to grant in the enfeebled post-Munich Czecho-Slovakia. On October 6, 1938, the Slovaks gained their political autonomy; they became the masters in Slovakia. Msgr. Tiso, as the president of the People's Party became the premier of the Slovak autonomous government, with the permission of his Bishop and the Vatican.

Even when Slovakia suffered by ceding territory to Hungary as a result of the Vienna Arbitration on November 2, 1938, the Slovaks were happy with the newly-gained autonomy. The Czechs left Slovakia; the Slovaks began to manage their own affairs in the best interests of the nation. It appeared that with the attainment of autonomy the aspirations of the Slovaks were fulfilled and that the stabilization of conditions in Slovakia would be enduring.

### **Tiso, President of the Republic**

Hitler was not satisfied with the dismemberment and neutralization of Czecho-Slovakia. When he decided to wage war against Poland, he wanted Czecho-Slovakia completely under his control, particularly the western part (Bohemia and Moravia) which was heavily industrialized and entirely encircled by the German Reich.

On March 13, 1939, Hitler summoned Tiso to Berlin

and confronted him with the German decision regarding Slovakia: Either secede from the Czechs and proclaim an independent Slovak State or suffer the consequence of partition between Germany and Hungary. On March 14, 1939, Tiso presented the German proposition to the Slovak parliament for decision. The Slovak parliament voted for independence of Slovakia. Msgr. Tiso became the president of the Slovak Republic.<sup>2</sup>

Msgr. Tiso and other Slovak political leaders were somewhat hesitant to proclaim Slovak independence. Said Tiso, in his defense before the National Court in Bratislava (1947): "Were it not for Hitler's pressure, the Slovak parliament would never have proclaimed independence."<sup>3</sup> The Magyars and the Czechs, to justify their claims upon Slovakia, had in the past repeatedly asserted that Slovakia, for economic reasons, was incapable of independence. Slovak political leaders, suddenly confronted with the question of independence for Slovakia, were apprehensive of the future. But rather than have their country partitioned and occupied, they logically chose the attempt at independence. And after this decision, they strove for the economic prosperity and cultural development of Slovakia, permanently to integrate Slovakia into the family of European nations.

It can be said that the Slovak attempt was successful. The wave of national enthusiasm engulfed the country, and Slovakia's economic and cultural standards flourished. The Slovaks, even those who at first were reserved, warmed to the Slovak State and had faith in its chief, Msgr. Jozef Tiso.<sup>4</sup> Even the most bitter enemies of the Slovaks had to acknowledge that the Slovak Republic was capable of existence.

That which Slovakia had proved in the years 1939-1945 is in no small measure the result of the political activity of Msgr. Tiso. But it is also the most controversial period of his political career.

### **The Fundamentals and Components of Tiso's Policies**

Msgr. Tiso's defense plea before the National Court at Bratislava, encompasses many noteworthy pronouncements

that point out the principles of his political activity. Consider but a few characteristic quotations.

The key to the evaluation of my activity is my character of the priest with its motivations and regulations, established by Christian teaching for public activity.<sup>5</sup>

Tiso as president of the Slovak Republic tried to lead his nation like a solicitous father according to Christian principles, to which, as a priest, he consecrated his life.

Politically I only did that which the well-being and interest of the Slovak nation dictated. What I did, I always did according to the best dictates of my knowledge and conscience, . . . always guided by the rules of morality . . . I fought evil with all my power, yielding to evil only when a greater evil threatened the nation.<sup>6</sup>

In this light, Msgr. Tiso explained his alleged collaboration with the Nazis. Msgr. Tiso stated that some collaboration with Germany was at that time a necessity dictated by Slovakia's geographic position, the development of European events and the law of self-preservation. Slovakia did not have its own foreign policy, but neither did other larger nations in Hitler-controlled Europe. Tiso pleaded that he was so concerned with the internal consolidation and development of Slovakia that he was unable to study the problems of international politics, including the war, upon which, because of his position, he could wield no influence. Slovak participation in the war against Russia, with two divisions, was merely symbolic, Tiso explained.<sup>7</sup>

According to Msgr. Tiso, his paramount policy was to secure the maximum of internal freedom and independence within the German sphere. Outwardly it was necessary to yield somewhat to German pressure, to keep them apart, thus avoiding armed intervention. For this reason it was necessary to ban the Communist Party (one of the main accusations against Tiso); it was necessary to participate in the war against Russia, and it was necessary to institute some elements of a totalitarian regime. All this was done, however, to pull wool over the eyes of the Germans. Inter-

nally, pleaded Tiso, Slovakia was governed democratically — and there was freedom.<sup>8</sup>

In this light Msgr. Tiso also explained anti-semitic activity in Slovakia. Msgr. Tiso stated that the rationalization of the Jewish problem was based on a percentual participation in the nation's economy. There were about 100,000 Jews in Slovakia, or 4% of the total population. Therefore only 4% of the nation's economy was permitted to Jews. Jewish businesses were being aryanized, that is, a non-Jew would buy 51% of a business at an officially established rate, and the former Jewish proprietor would remain as a partner. Later, at the dictate of the Germans, Jews were put into concentration camps and evacuated into Poland under the pretext that land would be provided for them so that they would be able to live under their own rule. Tiso justified his position by saying that he did not know at that time that the evacuated Jews would be exterminated in Polish and German concentration camps.<sup>9</sup>

### **A Weak Defense Herein**

In regard to the Jewish question, Msgr. Giuseppe Burzio, representative of the Holy See in Slovakia, intervened with President Tiso in behalf of the Jews. It was rumored that Msgr. Tiso, as a Catholic priest, should have resigned from the presidency, since he was unable to curtail the anti-semitic campaign dictated by the Germans and waged by Slovak extremists under the direction of Premier Dr. Vojtech Tuka.

Concerning the possibility of his resignation, let Tiso speak:

I did not resign because I felt a moral obligation to fulfill the duty that I had undertaken until I had been released from it by legally constituted functionaries... My action would have been egotistical had I left my nation in those difficult times and entered private life. My action would have been irresponsible and against the nation had I not taken into private life the moral values that I felt I represented<sup>10</sup>

He stated further that had he received an official request from his ecclesiastical authorities, he would have re-

signed, for then there would have been no decision to make, the responsibility would have been the Church authorities'. It is generally known that even representatives of the Jews had begged him to remain in office, for it would have been a total catastrophe for the Jews if someone else would have been president of the Slovak Republic.

Tiso managed to insert into the anti-Jewish law a provision to exempt some Jews. He was able to qualify a Jew as indispensable to Slovak economy and thus save him from deportation. About 9,000 such exemptions were made. Despite this, however, the Jewish question was really a weak point of Tiso's policy and of his defense.

### **The End of Msgr. Tiso**

Msgr. Tiso's trial began at the end of 1946 and lasted until April of 1947. On April 17, 1947, the jury of the National Court at Bratislava brought forth the verdict of death by hanging, and the sentence was carried out on the following morning. Msgr. Tiso died peacefully, committing himself to God. His body was either destroyed or buried secretly to prevent the Slovaks from paying their respects.

The standpoint of the Holy See, dissuading priests from participating directly in political activity and not identifying the Church with any particular political system or party, proved itself very much correct during the trial. Even though Msgr. Tiso was tried as a politician, it was difficult to separate his priesthood from his political function. Through Msgr. Tiso's trial the Catholic Church of Slovakia was pilloried, although unjustly. From the Church's point of view, it would have been better if, during the years of 1939 to 1945, the political life of Slovakia had been headed by a layman rather than a clergyman.

On the other hand, it is certain that Tiso had been unjustly condemned. Under German control it was impossible to conduct a better policy in the interests of Slovakia than the one Tiso implemented. Outright collaboration with Nazism, which Dr. Tuka attempted, would have



done an immeasurably greater harm to Slovakia. Msgr. Tiso constantly thwarted Tuka's attempts.

Msgr. Tiso's trial culminated during Lent when Christians are reminded of the trial and death of Christ. Slovaks openly compared Tiso's trial with the trial of Christ. Tiso, too, in his defense, alluded to this circumstance.

The court that sentenced Tiso was dominated by Communists. The president of the court, Dr. Ivan Daxner and the state prosecutors, Dr. Juraj Suján and Dr. Anton Rasla, were die-hard Communists. Furthermore, it seemed that the first two mentioned were predisposed against Msgr. Tiso, the Catholic priest, on religious grounds. Msgr. Tiso in his testament to the nation, written an hour before his death, rightfully stated: ". . . I consider myself, in the first place a martyr in the defense of Christianity against Communism."<sup>11</sup>

### **"Martyr of Love"**

Msgr. Tiso was a victim of political revenge. It was expected that even if he were condemned, he would be granted amnesty by Dr. Edward Benes, President of the new Czecho-Slovakia. Benes refused. "Osservatore Romano," of April 28, 1947, wrote that in the event of Msgr. Tiso's condemnation "political discretion would make it necessary to grant amnesty, even though in self interest..." to ameliorate the tense situation between Slovaks and Czechs. "As a martyr of love toward his homeland, Dr. Tiso will live on in the Slovak Catholic nation," "Osservatore Romano" concluded.

Although Dr. Benes had rid himself of Msgr. Tiso, it is certain that Tiso in death is a greater problem in the relationship between Czechs and Slovaks than Tiso would have been in life.

Msgr. Tiso lives in the Slovak nation as a hero and martyr. To the Slovaks he is a symbol of a crusader for the God-given rights of the Slovak nation. The Slovak Republic, with its six years of successful existence, is an actuality that cannot be eradicated from history. The Slovaks at home and abroad in the absolute majority stand

behind the ideals for which Msgr. Tiso, president of the Slovak Republic, lived and died. — "The Homiletic and Pastoral Review," November, 1955.

1. Courageous member of the Hungarian Parliament (1905-1918).

2. In parallel, Msgr. Jan Sramek, a Czech priest, became premier of the Czecho-Slovak government in exile.

3. Dr. Jozef Tiso About Himself, Edited by Dr. Joseph Pauco, Passaic, N. J.

4. As the war-front began to approach Slovakia, certain groups within the country, inspired from abroad, provoked an uprising in August of 1944. To gain the support of the Slovak populace, they spread rumors that Tiso had been imprisoned by the Germans and, therefore, it was necessary to fight Germany.

5. Op. cit., p. 121.

6. Op. cit., p. 111.

7. Op. cit., p. 37, 277.

8. Op. cit., p. 213 ss., 199, 201.

9. Op. cit., p. 313 ss.

10. Op. cit., p. 21.

11. Op. cit., p. 8.

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#### WHO SAID IT?

"The relations of today and tomorrow between Czecho-Slovakia and the Soviet Union are defined in the treaty of December 12, 1943, . . . It proclaims the lasting friendship of the two nations for the future which will be strengthened by widespread economic cooperation after the war. The future general collaboration is defined as that of two free and independent states, in which there will be no interference in the internal affairs of either." — (Ján Papánek, International Universities Press, Inc., New York, 1945)

• • •

"November 7, 1917, is the day that is marked in history as the beginning of a new era, which sought the guarantee of happiness to mankind by means of a new method of equalling differences among people and thus achieving contentment on earth. Today it is still too early from that epochal occasion to judge objectively the consequences of that great deed. One thing, however, is certain: it was the beginning of an enormous process full of ideas born of idealism." — (Dr. Joseph Lettrich, Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee of the "Council of Free Czechoslovakia," NOVÉ PRŮDY, November 18, 1945).

## CZECHO-SLOVAKIA OR CZECHOSLOVAKIA?

P. A. Hrobak

The ancestors of the Slovak people settled in the Danube territory during the fourth and sixth centuries and have occupied that territory ever since. Boundaries changed some with the centuries, but the Slovaks held on to their present land ever since they became a part of the Hungarian kingdom at the beginning of the 11th century. The Slovaks settled on both sides of the Morava and Danube rivers; the ancestors of the Czechs settled in the land of the Boii (Bohemia). The land of the Slovaks formed the heart of the Great Moravian Empire of the ninth century. The Slovaks already had built their first Christian church at Nitra in 830 — the first church in the entire territory of the western Slovanic peoples. The Magyars came into the Danube Valley long after the Slovaks.

There was no Czecho-Slovakia, no Czecho-Slovak political formation of any kind, until 1918, when the Habsburg Empire collapsed. There was a Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia — generally referred to by non-Czech historians as the "Bohemian Crown Lands," and by the Czechs as "Czech Crown Lands" — and the land of the Slovaks, which non-Slovak historians referred to as "Upper Hungary" or "Northern Hungary," while Slovaks called their land "Slovensko" (Slovakia).

The Slovaks did not have a common history, religious and national traditions, culture, and economy, with the Czechs until after 1918; but even after that date the Slovaks did not adopt the culture and national traditions of the Czechs, but adhered to their own. It is significant that the Catholic Church in Slovakia — the Slovak dioceses — was not under the jurisdiction of the ordinaries of Bohemia and Moravia, but under the jurisdiction of Rome and was directly responsible thereto. In America the Czechs refer to their churches as CZECH churches, while the Slovaks call theirs SLOVAK churches.

**In short: the Czechs never were, are not, and do not want to be Slovaks — and the Slovaks never were, are not,**

and do not want to be Czechs. The Slovaks developed under entirely different circumstances than the Czechs; the latter were dominated for centuries by the Germans and Austria, the former by the Magyars of Hungary. Both are members of the Slovanic (Slav) family of nations, but each is a distinct ethnic entity, just as are the Poles, Ukrainians, Croats, Slovenians, Serbians, Bulgarians and Russians.

The treaty by which Czecho-Slovakia came into being out of the rubble and ashes of the Habsburg Empire recognized the fact that the Czechs and Slovaks had agreed to form a joint political state, as political equals and as two distinct ethnic entities and, hence, the form used for the name in the treaty creating the new state was not the solid word "Czechoslovakia," but the hyphenated form "Czecho-Slovakia."

The Czechs and the Slovaks were supposed to enjoy equal rights, privileges, and responsibilities in their joint state. T. G. Masaryk told the Slovaks not to worry about being majorized by the more numerous Czechs: the Slovaks would manage their own household, while the Czechs would be masters in their land; the new state would be a federation like Switzerland or the United States. Because the Slovaks of America did not trust Masaryk, they asked him to put it in writing; he did on May 30, 1918, at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, when he drafted and signed the Pittsburgh Agreement. Without it Czecho-Slovakia never would have been born. This agreement is reproduced here as documentary proof that "Czecho-Slovak (ia)" was spelled with a hyphen.

However, once T. G. Masaryk, Dr. Edward Beneš, and their socialistic political entourage took over the government of the new State in Prague, the tendency developed to drop the hyphen and use the solid form. It soon became obvious to the Slovaks that "Czechoslovakia" was becoming synonymous with "Czech": domestic and foreign policy, culture, and economy, traditions and history, even though referred to as "Czechoslovak," were strictly Czech. The "Czechoslovak National Church" — promoted by Czechs in government at the expense and to the embarrassment of the overwhelming majority of the Czech Ca-

# Česko-Slovenská Dohoda,

uzavrená v Pittsburghu, Pa., dňa 30. mája, 1918.

## "Predstavitelia slovenských a českých organizácií vo Spoj. Štátoch. Slovenskej Ligy, Českého Národného Sdružení a Svätu Českých Katolíkov.

porokovali za prítomnosti predsedu Česko-Slovenskej Národ. Rady, prof. Masaryka, o česko-slovenskej otázke a o našich posaďadných programových prejavoch a usniesli sa nasledovne:

"Schvaľujeme politický program usilujúci sa o Spojenie Čechov a Slovákov v samostatnom štáte z Českých Zemi a Slovenska.

"Slovensko bude mať svoju vlastnú administratívu, svoj snem a svoje súdy.

"Slovenčina bude úradným jazykom v škole, v úrade a vo verejnom živote vôbec.

"Česko-slovenský štát bude republikou, jeho Konštitúcia bude demokratická.

"Organizácia spolupráce Čechov a Slovákov vo Spoj. Štátoch bude podľa potreby a meniacej sa situácie, pri spoločnom dorozumení, prehlbená a upravená.

"Podrobné ustanovenia o zariadení česko-slovenského štátu ponechávajú sa oslobodeným Čechom a Slovákom a ich právoplatným predstaviteľom."

Albert Mumatey

Anton Pálek, Jan Jurek ml.,  
Miroslav Jan, Matěj Vondruš,  
B. Muka, Michal Božák,  
Karel J. Mungar, Jan Kubaček,  
Josef Kubaček, Rie Jan Kubaček,  
Josef Kubaček, Rie Jan Kubaček,  
Josef Kubaček, Rie Jan Kubaček,  
Josef Kubaček, Rie Jan Kubaček,

T. J. Masaryk

Karel Pazda, Karel Pazda,  
Karel Pazda, Karel Pazda,  
Karel Pazda, Karel Pazda,  
Karel Pazda, Karel Pazda,  
Karel Pazda, Karel Pazda,

tholic population of Czecho-Slovakia — was strictly a Czech enterprise.

The Slovaks resisted the tendency and protested against it many times, but to no avail. In time the Czechs were able to influence historians, lexicographers, writers, university professors, editors, and government printing offices to drop the hyphen from the name of the joint political state of the Slovaks and Czechs and write it as a solid word: **"Czechoslovakia."** Many of these very people use the words Slovak, Czech, Slovakian, Slovakia, etc., properly respecting the spelling of these proper names and their derivatives, but make a common noun out of Slovak(ia) when using it in the compound form "Czechoslovak(ia)"!

Frank H. Vizetelly, the eminent lexicographer, noting the trend, had this to say about it in 1934:

"It was not without surprise that I found the form '**Czechoslovakia**' — originally written with a capital 'C,' to represent three elements of the people under one name, and a capital 'S' to represent another element — printed in the U. S. Geographic Board's report as a solid word. How can these things be in the fact of the formal proclamation of the independence of the new republic issued from Prague, Nov. 14, 1918, and the treaty of peace between the allied and associated powers and the enemy, signed June 28, 1919, to say nothing of the treaty of peace with Austria, which was signed Sept. 10, 1919? In these documents, which are surely 'legal authority for the spelling of the name,' the form '**Czecho-Slovakia**' was used. It would be interesting to hear why the members of the Board and the press of the U. S. A. pretty generally decided to suppress the capital letter in '**Slovakia**'? Why make fish of one and flesh of another?"

"It would be interesting to hear officially on these points, for it is well known that in Czecho-Slovakia the Czechs hold office in the cabinet, while the Slovaks are left in the cold, yet the Slovaks are the toilers of the nation. If the war was fought 'to vindicate the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed in defiance of international good faith by the arbitrary will of a stronger and overmasterly power,' have we not there evidence of the survival of this spirit in the way the Czechs are suppressing the Slovaks?" (1)

"In this connection," said professor Alois R. Nykl, a Czech, "a careful perusal of historical material contained in **The New Europe** and in **The New York Times Current History** between 1917 and 1922 should render signal service. It has become too wide-spread a practice of late to dismiss important facts from consideration, and to regard



yesterday as having been completely wiped out today... The term 'Czechoslovak,' as far as I know, was first used in Russia, as the title of a journal published in Kiev a year before Masaryk's first public appearance at Geneva, on July 6, 1915 (John Hus Day)." (2)

When writing, T. G. Masaryk himself often used the hyphenated form in 1917. In his essay "Bohemia and the European Crisis," published in *The New Europe*, January 25, 1917, we find: 'Bohemia is a part of Austria-Hungary, but, nevertheless, the **Czecho-Slovaks** are working and even fighting for and with the Allies" (p. 33) ... "In this vast struggle the place of the **Czecho-Slovaks** can only be on the side of the Slavs and of the Western nations" (p. 46); and on p. 64, we find an excellent map showing "the racial distribution of the **Czechs and Slovaks**."

In the issue of February 22, 1917, of the same journal, Masaryk wrote about "The Future Status of Bohemia"; there we find: "One of the nations to be liberated is the **Czecho-Slovak**" (p. 161); on the following page, the note to President Wilson proposes the liberation of "**the Czechs and the Slovaks**" (des Tchèques et des Slovaques), whereas the English translation has it "**Czecho-Slovaks**"! Furthermore, and not without significance, Masaryk said on pg. 162: "The Slovaks are a part of the Czech nation. . . It will depend, for instance, how close the union is as to whether the name '**Czechoslovak, Czecho-Slovak, or Czech and Slovak**' will be decided upon. There is no doubt that the union of the two branches will grow."

The old dream of Czech imperialists: that one day the Czechs would substantially increase the numbers of their nation by "absorbing" the Slovaks one way or another. It probably did not occur to them at the time that the Slovaks might have something to say and do about the matter: twenty years of Czecho-Slovakia later, the Slovaks were less absorbable than ever!

Telling us how the Slovaks feel about the hyphen and the fiction of a united "Czechoslovak" nation, Professor Nykl says:

"The term '**Czechoslovak, Czechoslovakia**' creates in the vast majority of Slovaks (roduverní Slováci — patriotic Slovaks) an in-

tensive antagonism, such as would be created in other people by terms like: Swedonorwegia, Hispanoportugalia, Amerocanadia, Austrohungaria. . . . For that reason, I entertain doubts as to Slovaks being willing to drop the hyphen. If they decide willingly, without violence, to cooperate with the Czechs in 'Czecho-Slovakia' — as stated in the Pittsburgh Pact — it would seem wise not to quarrel over a small detail in spelling. In their homeland they had had sufficient experience with 'Czechoslovakia,' then six months in 'Czecho-Slovakia,' and finally in a 'Slovakia' trimmed by the csonka Magyars.

"If they really think that they can do better as an independent unit, after their past experience, let us leave them alone and be friends just the same, instead of eternally bickering and fighting. Europe, after all, is not a land of African or other native tribes, which have to be kept down 'for their own good,' according to the theories of Lebensraum philosophers of all shades and persuasions. Great Britain seems to be getting along passably with Eire. The vast majority of the Germans in Czechoslovakia will not call themselves Czechoslovaks, but Germans of Czechoslovak citizenship, and similarly the Magyars and orthodox Jews. Nor will there ever exist a Czechoslovak or a Czecho-Slovak language, but only the CZECH language and the SLOVAK language." (3)

What do we find in dictionaries, encyclopedias, and reference works in regard to the hyphen, and the Czechs and Slovaks? Let me cite just a few examples:

1. **The Encyclopedia Britannica**, 11th Edition, 1911, has the word "CZECH" (Vol. VII, p. 722; and "SLOVAKS" (Vol. XXV, p. 244). Of course, there was no Czecho-Slovakia prior to October, 1918, so we cannot expect to find it in books published before that time.

2. **Webster's Secondary-School Dictionary** — abridged from Webster's International Dictionary — 1913, published by the American Book Company, G. and C. Merriman Co., Springfield, Mass., has: "Czech — an individual of the most westerly branch of the Slavs, chiefly inhabiting Bohemia and Moravia. Also the language of the Czechs; Bohemian." . . . "Slovak — one of a Slavic people of northwestern Hungary; also their language."

3. **The Catholic Encyclopedia**, Supplement I, Vol. XVII, 1922, has "Slovakia. See Jugoslavia" (p. 694). Slovakia, we learn, was then a part of "Jugoslavia" (p. 425), but at the same time also a part of "Czechoslovakia" (p. 245)!

4. **The Standard Reference Work**, for the Home, School, and Library, 1924, by the (Minneapolis and Chicago) Standard Education Society, gives us: "Czecho-Slovakia, a republic composed of the former Austrian states of Bohemia,

Moravia, part of Silesia, and the **district** of Hungary known as **Slovakia**" . . . "**Bohemia**, formerly a province of the Austrian Empire, today a **portion** of the new **Czecho-Slovak** republic" . . . "**Slovaks**, a **portion** of the Slavic race, living in former northern Hungary and adjacent parts of Moravia, now included in **Czecho-Slovakia**. They are related to the Poles, Bohemians, and Moravians."

5. **Webster's Universal Dictionary of the English Language**, 1936. by The World Syndicate Publishing Company, has: "**Czecho-Slovak**."

6. **The New Universities Webster Dictionary**, 1938, by The World Syndicate Publishing Company, does not include "**Czecho-Slovakia**" or "**Czechoslovakia**" at all, but has "**Slovak** — one of the Slavic people of northwestern Hungary and part of Moravia; the language of the Slovaks" . . . "**Czech** — a member of the most westerly branches of the Slavonic family, including Bohemians, Moravians, and Slovaks."

7. **Webster's Elementary Dictionary** — a dictionary for boys and girls — 1941, by the American Book Company, G. and C. Merriman Co., Springfield, Mass., confuses youngsters thusly: "**Czech** — a member of one of the two branches of the Slavic race in **Czechoslovakia**" . . . "**Slovak** — one of the people living in **Slovakia**, a province of **Czechoslovakia**; also the language spoken by these people" . . . "**Czechoslovakia** — a republic in central Europe."

8. **The Winston Universal Reference Library**, 1942 by The John C. Winston Co., Philadelphia, Pa., gives both the hyphenated and the unhyphenated forms, as well as: "**Czech** — 1. a member of the most westerly branch of the Slavonic family, which includes Bohemians, Moravians and Slovaks; 2. their language: also called **Czechish**; 3. a citizen of **Czechoslovakia**" . . . "**Slovak** — one of the race of Slavs living in Central Europe, closely akin to the Czechs of Bohemia; 2. the language of these people."

9. **The American College Dictionary**, 1953, by Random House, New York, has "**Slovak, Slovakia**," but gives both "**Czecho-Slovakia**" and "**Czechoslovakia**."

10. **Information Please Almanac**, 1954, by Dan Golenpaul Associates, The Macmillan Company, New York, carried a brief Czech story on "**Czechoslovakia**" and men-

tioned **Slovakia**, excluding the latter from its index, though it did include Serbia and Slovenia.

11. **The World Almanac and Book of Facts**, 1956, by the New York World-Telegram and The Sun, gives a short version of "**Czechoslovakia**," in which it mentions "**Slovakia**," excluding it, however, from its index, though it does include Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia — the component parts of Yugoslavia; "**noted Czechs**" are listed but not Slovaks.

12. **The 1956 Catholic Almanac** — Catholic Facts at Your Fingertips, by St. Anthony's Guild, Paterson, N. J., gives us a listing of four **Slovak** Catholic benevolent societies and two **Czech** Catholic organizations, carries some six items on the Church in "**Czechoslovakia**," but makes absolutely no distinction between Slovaks and Czechs.

13. **A Catholic Dictionary** — the Catholic Encyclopaedic Dictionary — 1949, edited by Donald Attwater, The Macmillan Company, New York, tells us about "The Church in **Czechoslovakia**":

"This state now consists of Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia, whose inhabitants are **Czechs and Slovaks**, with minorities of German and Hungarian origin, about 14 million in all; 80 percent are Catholics, but both Protestantism and secularism are strong. After the state was formed in 1918, there was a nationalist schism among the **Czechs**.

"There are two ecclesiastical provinces, Prague and Olomouc, with four suffragan dioceses and **five others immediately subject to the Holy See**, and a Byzantine-rite diocese of Ruthenians."

Though Attwater does not tell us where the underscored "**five others**" are, we know that the reference is to the dioceses in Slovakia.

14. **Example Sheets from Sections of Proposed N. C. W. C. News Service Style Book**, Section X — Special, 1956: "**Czechoslovakia** — X. 29 — without a hyphen. But do not say **Czech** in a story or head when you mean **Czechoslovak**."

When I received the above, I wrote to Mr. Frank Hall, NCWC News Service Director, on May 24, 1956, telling him it was wrong to write Czecho-Slovakia without a hyphen, citing some of the above information to back my argument. Mr. Hall, apparently knows that there are Slovaks and Czechs, that there is a Czech language and a Slovak

language, that the Slovaks are not Czechs, and vice-versa, but still insists on **"Czechoslovakia"** as a solid word. In his reply (June 8, 1956), Mr. Hall said among other things:

"As for the use of the hyphen: The Diplomatic List of the U. S. State Department, the Political Handbook of the World, the Congressional Directory, the Associated Press, the United Press, the I. N. S., the yearbook 'Information Please' write it **Czechoslovakian**. I don't know of any other standard guide that does it any other way."

Mr. Hall like many others, obviously did not inquire how the "standard guides" he referred to came to write **"Czechoslovakia"** as a solid word. Taking the stand that "everybody is doing it" can hardly be accepted as justification. If it is right, according to standard guides and authoritative sources, to write Austria-Hungary, Anglo-American, American-British, Anglo-Saxon, Sino-Japanese, Anglo-Norman, Anglo-Indian, Franco-American, Anglo-Irish, Spanish-American, German-American, Indo-European, etc. — all with a hyphen — then it certainly must also be right to write **Czecho-Slovakia** with a hyphen!

To the Slovaks omitting the hyphen means the denial of their national existence and subordination and subservience to the Czechs. The Slovaks insisted and still insist on the hyphen whenever the joint political state, which they agreed to establish under certain conditions, is referred to. They insist more on that than they do on the continued existence of the political monstrosity which Czecho-Slovakia, under the guidance of T. G. Masaryk and Dr. Edward Beneš, turned out to be.

Today, Slovaks everywhere cry out resolutely: **NO MORE CZECHO-SLOVAKIA!**

That, of course, would definitely solve the question of the hyphen. America helped to liberate the Slovaks from the Magyars and was in a great measure responsible for the creation of Czecho-Slovakia in 1918. America stands for the freedom and independence of all nations, whether large or small. How then can any responsible American insist that Slovaks must forever be dominated by the Czechs?

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(1) The Chicago Tribune, May 8, 1934.

(2) The Slavonic and East European Review (American Series, III, 4), Vol. XXII, No. 61, December 1944.

(3) Ibidem.

## ŠTÚR AND THE SLOVAK INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT

P. A. Hrobak

John Kollár and John Hollý, eminent Slovak poets, had sung their great songs, when a group of some fifty Slovak youngsters assembled on the ruins of Devín — the unmarked ruins which spoke so eloquently of the glorious past of the ancestors of the Slovak nation. The group sang "Devín, milý Devín" (Devín, dear Devín) to the tune of "Nitra, milá Nitra" and had themselves baptized anew: to their Christian names they added new Slovanic names as a symbol that they were being born to a new life dedicated wholly to the service of their nation. The Slovak students were inspired by Kollár's sonnets, Hollý's epics, Mickiewicz's Ode to Youth, and by the magnetic personality of Louis Štúr.

These Slovak young people carried the new era of Slovak history on their shoulders. This was the youth of the capital of Slovakia, Bratislava. Since the time of Matthew Bél, the Bratislava Lyceum enjoyed great fame as an educational institution and, hence, attracted the youth of Slovakia. At the beginning of the nineteenth century something new was introduced at the Lyceum: an institute of the Slovak and Czech languages and literatures. Kollár was there in 1816 and exercised great influence on the students. One evening in 1818 two young men walked the road to Devín, discussing national matters quite seriously. One was Šafárik, who later wrote the great work "Slovanic antiquities," and the other was Palacký, who later became a great Czech historian. Although Kollár and Šafárik left Bratislava, the sparks of their ardor fell among the youthful scholars and smouldered in their minds. Then some one came among them to fan the embers into a flame and to unite them in one service, as he so aptly expressed it: we have entered the service of the spirit — and therefore we must travel the thorny road of life!

That young man was Louis Štúr.

Štúr entered the "service of the spirit" in a natural manner, without extraordinary crises. He was born in Zay-Uhrovec in 1815; his father was a teacher and ardent



Slovak; his mother, too, was a loyal Slovak, graced with a quiet, pleasant disposition; and his older brother, Charles, excelled as a writer of Slovak poetry. In short, the home of Štúr was truly Slovak. While in Raab, Štúr was greatly influenced by Professor Pec; and in Bratislava (1829) it was his fortune to fall in with congenial Slovak young men.

Štúr admired his elders, especially the youthful Chalupka, who had contributed much with their writings to awaken the Slovaks nationally. Štúr became the favorite of the eminent Schröer and Palkovič, who recognized in Štúr the qualifications for leadership. Štúr's dynamic personality attracted Slovak youth to the Slovak cause. One evening Štúr met a young man on the street; he knew he was from Beckov and two years younger than himself; but he also knew that this young man for some reason avoided Slovak company. After greeting him, Štúr had a talk with him. The young man later admitted that what Štúr had said to him on that occasion kept him awake for several nights and made him resolve to join Štúr's group. That young man was Joseph M. Hurban, who later became one of the great men of Slovak letters.

Štúr did not persuade others with any special, expert arguments; he persuaded them with his entire personality. Štúr was a dynamo of action; what he asked others to do, he did himself; his entire life was a labor of love for his people. The Slovaks, his people, needed scholars who would dig into the past to build for the future. Štúr knew that the Slovaks were doomed as a nation, unless they were awakened nationally, and that without selfless teachers this was impossible. He set himself to the task of providing them.

Julius Botto, Slovak historian, said that "Štúr trained for the Slovak nation energetic, selfless men, genuine national heroes." Štúr and his followers prepared the Slovak nation for the difficult times ahead. Indeed, without them the Slovaks might now be a forgotten nation, a nation suppressed and beaten into oblivion by a powerful, foreign and hostile ruler. Štúr united the Slovak nation by establishing the central dialect of Slovakia as the lit-

erary medium and thus made the Slovaks stronger in the face of the enemy. He was a genuine Slovak patriot and democrat; he fought not only for the rights of his own people, but also for the rights of all subjugated nations of Europe.

The national life of the Slovaks in the past was not only a passive bewailment, a life of hapless "do nothing." It was filled with positive work, creating higher cultural and political values. Slovaks should remember this and keep on preaching it in their schools, books, public assemblies, newspapers, and everywhere. Perhaps we need nothing more than a large portion of national pride. Let us not seek the source of our Slovak national life in foreign gardens when we have it at home, that is what Louis Štúr told his people.

The Magyars once unveiled a gigantic statue of Louis Kossúth before the Hungarian (Magyar) Parliament with real occidental pomposity. The Slovaks who went through a Magyar school, or have any knowledge of Magyar history and literature, know the kind of superman Magyar history and literature made of our Slovak countryman, the renegade Kossúth. To the Magyars Kossúth is a most brilliant historic phenomenon, a man whose equal it would be difficult to find in all Europe, nay, in all the world. Kossúth is depicted as a fighter of freedom, as the first man who raised his voice for the liberation of the subjugated. But the fact remains, nevertheless, that Louis Štúr, the patriotic Slovak, did more in this regard than did Kossúth.

From the forties of the last century down to our times, Slovak national life lived in the spirit of Louis Štúr. Yet it so happened that the merits of this great man of Slovak history were little acknowledged by writers of European history. Once Štúr's magnificent characteristics become known, the world will come to know the great son that Slovakia gave to mankind.

Today, Louis Štúr's personality cannot be hewed into the narrow framework of Slovakia. His influence and significance was broader. In Bratislava, Štúr did not bring only the Slovaks together; among his enthusiastic disciples were also the Croatians and Serbs. What did Štúr

give to mankind? He devoted his entire life for the rights of the subjugated and oppressed.

In the memorable Bratislava parliament of 1847, two Slovak countrymen met in a battle of words. Both were intelligent, educated and fiery speakers. Nevertheless, there was a great difference between them. One entered the services of Magyarization, while the other remained loyal to his Slovak nation. The first was Kossúth, the second Štúr.

Kossúth represented the County of Pešť, Štúr the free royal city of Zvolen. Free royal cities had the right to send their representatives to the Assembly, but these could only speak and not vote. As a delegate of a free royal city, Štúr represented the privileged landowner's class in the Assembly. But even this matter did not make a renegade of him, because he served ideas and ideals and not particular people.

"We want freedom," Štúr said in that Parliament. "But it is said that there is plenty of freedom in our homeland; yes, not only plenty, but even too much freedom," continued Štúr, "but only the landowner's brand of freedom, and of the real, human freedom there is very little. If our towns had more freedom, even our people would have never fallen into such thralldom."

Kossúth replied to Štúr. But, lo and behold, what this Magyar idol and champion of freedom said on that occasion:

"That cannot be helped; that is the way the world goes. It is fate that the one who stands lower in the community is suppressed and must bear the burden and taxes; on the other hand, the one who comes along in civic life receives rights and stands in honor. At this time I am opposed to granting towns a vote in our Assembly."

It was thus that Kossúth "defended" freedom.

Štúr, however, would not be silenced. When he came together with Kossúth in December, he said in the Hungarian Assembly:

"Recently, when I was present here and mentioned the sorrowful plight of the wretched taxpayers, the worthy deputy from Pešť County, Mr. Kossúth, saw the hand

of fate in the oppression of the people and said that is the way the world goes when the lower class is suppressed and the higher class receives more rights. I see no hand of fate in the matter, because then the status of the oppressed could never be corrected. We demand freedom in the country and to allow urban jobs which are not in line with freedom. Does such a person, who works for others and instead of being rewarded is despised, have a fatherland, will such a person become attached to his country as he would to his mother? The sacred cause of mankind challenges us so that once we would express the principle of the liberation of people and honestly bring it into being. When this redemption is accomplished, the judicial power of the landowner and the county gentry must cease, because freedom would not be served if a people liberated from the robot would continue to remain under the club of the lords."

Behold the difference between Štúr and Kossúth. Of course, some months later even Kossúth took up Štúr's cry for the liberation of all the people of Hungary. But he did this not out of internal conviction, but because circumstances had forced him to take such a benevolent position. Štúr fought for the rights of the subjugated even against the will of those who had sent him to the Assembly, while Kossúth fought for them only after a revolutionary wave had inundated Hungary.

The fundamental trait of Štúr's ideals was his love for freedom. If Štúr had done nothing else but fought in the Bratislava Assembly for the rights of the enslaved and subjugated, even then he would have deserved to be placed by the Slovak nation among its most distinguished sons. But he meant more than that to the Slovak nation.

Štúr was not a naive romantic, as he is frequently depicted. No one since his time has yet come up with a more realistic program. Štúr did not flatter faults and mistakes; his articles in the "Slovenské Národné Noviny" prove that he fought fearlessly against the shortcomings and delinquencies of his people. His leading editorials would be just as actual today as they were in his time.

Not only in the defense of the purity of the Slovak language, but in defense of the recognition of the inherent rights of the Slovak nation.

Štúr's "let us not abandon ourselves, Slovak countrymen" is just as timely today as it was in 1845. And is it not just as timely to stress that "higher is the cause of the entire nation, higher is the cause of the whole than that of individual persons and even though individuals harm us, the cause itself does not do so. But with us thus far it has been so that individuals offended by our people immediately abandoned the cause itself. . ."

Today our mighty America with her Allies is fighting for the freedom of all enslaved and oppressed nations. This freedom must not miss the Slovak nation. The Slovaks even today, as during the times of Štúr, have inherent and God-given rights to complete freedom as do all other nations. To fight for the freedom of all nations, including the Slovak nation, is the obligation not only of the Slovaks and Americans of Slovak descent, but also the obligation of all lovers of truth and freedom. Indeed, the Slovaks existed and shall continue to exist, if they only remember Štúr's: "Let us not abandon ourselves, Slovak countrymen!"

Štúr's school of thought built the foundation for the independence movement of Slovakia over a hundred years ago — and the Slovaks are building upon this foundation ever since, and will keep on building until they attain complete freedom from all foreign and hostile domination. Just as Štúr repudiated and condemned the hegemony of the Magyars and the materialistic philosophy of Marx and Engels, so the Slovaks today stand solidly against materialistic Communism and all forms of totalitarianism and the hegemony of the Czechs. The spirit of Štúr lives on!

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#### WHO SAID IT?

"The Democratic Party knows that the Slovak nation can be assured of a happier, more secure and a brighter future only by working together with the Communist Party." — (Dr. Joseph Lettrich, Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee of the "Council of Free Czechoslovakia," ČAS, Bratislava, February 1, 1946).

## BENEŠ AND THE COMMUNIZATION OF CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

**John B. Fox**

The foreign policy of our country, from the Monroe Doctrine till the late nineteen-forties, was aimed at the greatest possible isolation. This was especially true, because of the principles laid down in the mentioned Monroe Doctrine, as far as the Eastern hemisphere was concerned. Thus, after World War II, the call to leadership of the democratic world found us in many respects unprepared. Suddenly we learned that our knowledge of the rest of the world, especially Europe, was quite limited.

We set about with known American assiduousness to tackle the great task thrust upon us. Realizing that in order to present real leadership we must know our allies, we commenced to accumulate information about the various nations, searching every aspect of their national lives. In pursuing this, our leaders solicited the aid of exiled politicians and also that of the various national organizations in this country.

Though we have made tremendous progress in the above undertaking, in many instances, especially as far as some small nations are concerned, we have hardly started the job.

To state a case where our Administration, mostly due to complexity of the situation, has hardly obtained a true picture, we mention Czecho-Slovakia.

The foreign policy of Czecho-Slovakia from 1918-1948 was molded by Eduard Beneš and his political aides. During those thirty years Beneš was a virtual dictator as far as the foreign affairs of his country were concerned. In addition to that, he did more than any other politician outside the USSR to make the Soviet Union acceptable to the West and gain admission to the League of Nations. Beneš is now deceased, but his disciples, many of whom are in this country, carry on in his work. They are acting as consultants to our Administration, exercising influence on Radio Free Europe, Voice of America, Congress, etc.



It seems worth-while, therefore, to examine Beneš's political relationship to the USSR. In doing so, we will not repeat Sir Winston Churchill's condemning opinion of Beneš, stated in one of his present books, but will quote from a neat little book published by the Czech-American National Alliance in 1944 entitled, "Eduard Beneš in His Own Words." Therein friends of Mr. Beneš did us a favor in selecting from the mass of his speeches and publications statements expressing his stand on major political issues in chronological order from 1914-1944.

The following, then, are quotes from "Eduard Beneš in His Own Words" pertaining to the USSR, giving the date when they were made:

1917: Our revolutionary action welcomed the Russian Revolution openly and sincerely . . .

1918: The Allies tried to use our soldiers in Russia for intervention, but this was opposed . . .

1920: We refute the assertion that if decisive steps had been taken in time against the Bolsheviks, they could have been destroyed.

In connection with Russia it was our (i.e., Czecho-Slovak) government, almost the only one in the whole of Europe, that understood the situation and foresaw correctly the evolution of events.... As to Russia, we must and shall help her, so far as it is in our power. . . .

1921: Our position on Russian problems, which we often defended with difficulty, but which our government executed, is today generally and fully accepted. The Allies and the whole European public opinion turned away from the idea of intervention in Russia. Our Republic has been following this policy honestly and consistently for more than three years and is therefore now in a strong moral position.

1922: In the future . . . it will be a struggle for a federalistic, democratic Russia. We believe in the future of this Russia. Our relations to the Russian people are proved by our tradition and our whole policy.

The Czecho-Slovak government feels satisfaction in having followed for five years a policy in Russian affairs that was fully justified even in the struggle for that policy in Geneva. We shall continue on this course also in the future without change.

1923: Our affection for and interest in Russia must be preserved and deepened. Without Russia, European politics and European peace are not imaginable; we have therefore tried, so far as possible, to open the doors for the mutual contact of Russia and Europe.

This Russia simply by its existence will be a real safeguard to our national independence.

I have faith in this future democratic Russia and therefore do not worry about our fate.

1924: The natural conclusion of this evolution is a definite *de jure* recognition of Russia by all states and the establishment of normal relations with the Soviet Union. . . .

1925: Perhaps it will not be long before we shall achieve a second Locarno when the Whole of Europe comes to an understanding with Russia. This will be for the good and well-being of Russia as well as of Europe. . . .

1926: Our policy toward Russia was always guided by the belief that we should be prepared for the moment when Russia would take up her position in Europe. . . .

1933: . . . also the policy of Soviet Russia has displayed certain symptoms of changed orientation. Russia has shown great understanding of the needs of peace, having concluded pacts of non-aggression with her neighbors, Poland and the Little Entente.

1934: The return of Russia to European politics will facilitate the creation of real equilibrium among the powers in Europe. The policy of rapprochement between ourselves and Soviet Russia is proceeding along normal lines. . . .

1935: Efforts for the strengthening of peace for the good of all the countries of Europe lay at the bottom of the cooperation between Russia and Czecho-Slovakia.

1937: Soviet Russia is devoting herself more to her internal affairs.

A great deficiency in the political systems of Europe after the last war was that that Soviet Union had not been invited to cooperate in its foundation and direction, but only in 1934, when it was already late, became involved in its collective defense.

1938: Russia remains faithful to us to the very last; I know that. . . .

1939: If Soviet Russia were again excluded from the organization of Europe the new collaboration of the organized political units would again lose their equilibrium. This would also inevitably lead to attempts to isolate Soviet Europe from European influences.

Geographically and politically European Russia belongs to Europe. This is an inescapable fact. . . .

1942: Russia is fighting not only for herself, but for all of us.

And none of us can contemplate another two decades in which Soviet Russia would be isolated from the affairs of Europe.

Immediately after the assault on the Soviet Union by Germany, we entered into official negotiations for the resumption of our old friendly and allied relations with the Soviet Union, as they existed before Munich. These negotiations were proceeding without any difficulties and in the spirit of our former friendship. On July 18, 1941, a treaty of alliance was signed, which contained a full recognition of us, without any reservations. I wish to state objectively that our relations with the Soviet Union are really friendly and loyal; there is today between us the same relationship of alliance as was before Munich, and it is our conviction and wish this remain so after the war. I am certain the collaboration of Europe with the Soviet Union will again make for the cooperation of the Union with Europe, that confidence and friendship will result and develop, that there will be an equilibrium of forces. . . .

In Czecho-Slovakia, we had for twenty years worked for collaboration between the West and the East of Europe. . . .

The United Nations are determined today to create a new system of collective security in Europe soon after the war. . . I support the conception of Anglo-American-Soviet collaboration.

1943: For my part I have an abiding confidence in the Russians. They will fulfill scrupulously the Teheran decisions so as to safeguard future peace.

Between the Soviet Union and Czecho-Slovakia all fundamental and important questions relating to their mutual relations have been settled. This fact has great political significance for the future. . . .

Much of what is now being appreciated about the Soviet Union, I saw during my first visit to Moscow in 1935; for this reason, I have trusted the Soviet Union in the present war. Certain modifications in the Soviet Union that have recently surprised the rest of the world are natural consequences, partly of the war and partly of the changes associated with its world position (the abolition of the International, the new attitude towards religion, intensified Soviet patriotic feeling and the recent changes in the Soviet Constitution to the advantage of the Federated Republics). I see in it the natural attitude of a successful evolution of the victorious revolution, that has to be politically stabilized and that is simply progressing in accordance with its own laws. Hence, from 1922 on I strove for a rapprochement between Europe and the Soviets. . . .

1944: It seemed to me that if full understanding were reached between ourselves and the Soviets, and if there were also complete and mutual trust among us, it would be possible to point to this very achievement as an example, even in the United States, and that the Allies, particularly the greater powers, would thereby be fundamentally drawn closer together.

Thus Mr. Beneš and his political co-workers preached to the world for thirty years. It is evident that this was not just a spell of fleeting enthusiasm for the seemingly humanitarian element in Soviet propaganda, but rather the life work of politicians who, for some reason or other, are still recognized in some circles.

Mr. Beneš and his government-in-exile were granted asylum in England during World War II. In 1945 Beneš went to Moscow for instructions before returning to Czecho-Slovakia. In violation of the principles of the United Nations Declaration, somewhere in the shuffle, Ruthenia, which had been part of Czecho-Slovakia between the wars, was lost, apparently offered up as a token of good will to the Kremlin chief. Certainly Beneš made other major concessions about which few were informed, so that he might return as "president" to Czecho-Slovakia.

It is our contention that Czecho-Slovakia after World

War II could hardly be considered a free agent. The entire police power throughout the country was in Communist hands from the very beginning. Still Mr. Beneš decided to play his hand till the end. He, as "president," shortly after the "liberation," nationalized the greater part of Czecho-Slovak industry by mere presidential decree, thus paralyzing the country's economy. And none of Stalin's agents did a better job of eliminating all anti-Communists and anti-Socialistic elements from politics than did Beneš.

After Beneš and his co-workers had achieved their long-sought goal, the entrance of the Soviets into the European political arena, they could not possibly be of any further service to the Communists. Thus, when the latter took over complete control of Czecho-Slovakia in February, 1948, Beneš was demoted from the presidency and Jan Masaryk, his foreign minister in despair killed himself by jumping from a window. Dorothy Thompson, on the margin of the Czecho-Slovak disaster, in a magazine article summed up the situation with the comment that "such is the fate of collaborators "

Today the co-workers of the same Beneš, with a cunningness approaching that of a Talleyrand, are still presenting themselves to our Administration as representatives of the Czech and Slovak peoples. One can imagine how the Czechs and Slovaks behind the Iron Curtain feel, when they hear the same voices which over a period of thirty years advocated the Soviet cause, now being broadcast over the waves of the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe: the same politicians who contributed to the enslavement of their country!

Today the whole democratic world is suffering from what Mr. Beneš and his collaborators advocated and helped bring about. And the oppressed and persecuted Czechs and Slovaks might turn to Shakespeare and utter with Mark Anthony: "the evil that men do lives after them. . . ."

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**RECOMMENDED BOOKS:** "The Slovaks" (Jurchak \$3.00; **SLOVAK FOR BEGINNERS**" (Books I-III) \$1.50 (the set); "Hrobak's English-Slovak Dictionary" \$4.00; "SLOVAK LESSONS" (Hrobak) \$3.50.

## MASARYK'S DEMOCRACY AND SLOVAKIA

Joseph A. Mikuš

An American newspaperman, desiring to know the details about Czecho-Slovakia, put the following questions to me recently:

1. What does the Pittsburgh Agreement mean to the Slovaks?

2. What might have been the opinion of M. R. Štefánek about the status of Slovakia within the Czecho-Slovak State?

3. Did the Slovak deputies in the Prague Parliament vote for the Constitution of Czecho-Slovakia in 1920?

4. Is it true that the autonomist movement never attained a majority among the voters of Slovakia?

5. How strong were the "Magyarones" in the Slovak People's Party?

6. What is the political significance of Catholicism and Protestantism in Slovakia?

7. What is the present Slovak political program?

Since these questions are asked more frequently by persons interested in the truth about the Czecho-Slovakia of T. G. Masaryk and Dr. Edward Beneš, the following article, I hope, will greatly help to clear up matters in this regard.

Before 1918, Slovakia was an integral part of the Kingdom of Hungary. For almost a hundred years the Slovaks were for a federative reform of Hungary, according to the principles of nationalities. Since the Magyars were shortsighted and did not consent to any such reform, the Slovaks decided, during the first World War, with the Czechs on a Czecho-Slovak federation. If there is any logic in the effort of a man who tries to save himself when sinking in a pond, it is rather in his will to preserve his life than in the choice between two ponds that he would prefer to drown in. The Slovaks, abandoning Hungary and agreeing to the formation of a Czecho-Slovak State, were motivated by the idea of preserving and developing their national individuality. The Pittsburgh Agreement — con-

cluded between the representatives of the Slovak League of America, on the one side, and the Czech National Alliance and the Federation of the Czech Catholics, on the other, and signed on May 30, 1918, by T. G. Masaryk as the representative of the Czecho-Slovak National Council — contains precise stipulations in this respect.

The Czecho-Slovak problem, as developed after 1918, arose from the subsequent repudiation of the Pittsburgh Agreement by Masaryk, as President of Czecho-Slovakia. Masaryk did this despite the fact that this agreement was by far a much more important document in the modern history of Czechs and Slovaks than any other one, including the "Czecho-Slovak" Constitution of 1920. The Pittsburgh Agreement assured moral and political foundations to the prospective state of Czecho-Slovakia. Law cannot be considered separately from morals and politics. It is indeed only a formal expression of co-ordination attained by certain social forces toward a higher end. Undoubtedly, those forces manifested themselves in the Pittsburgh Agreement.

Masaryk denied the "legal" validity of this document, but he could not deny the fact of having received about a million dollars from the Slovak League of America, which had been given him to finance the activity of the Czecho-Slovak National Council in Paris. Without this money from Americans of Slovak descent, Masaryk and Beneš would have remained somewhere in France as obscure journalists or poor college-teachers.

In any deal none of the two contracting parties has the right arbitrarily to pick up advantages and repudiate obligations. Something like that would be double-dealing. To say that the members of the Slovak League of America were American citizens and, consequently, did not have the right to pledge themselves for Slovakia is not honest. When he signed the Pittsburgh Agreement, Masaryk was a political refugee acting in contradiction with a pro-Hapsburg declaration of the Union of Czech writers. He himself had no delegation from anybody. But the Slovaks have never said that he was an impostor. Why should, then, his indirect affirmation be accepted that the signa-



tories of the Pittsburgh Agreement on behalf of the Slovak League were nothing else than impostors?

What might have been the attitude of M. R. Štefánik in regard to the political structure and organization of Czecho-Slovakia?

It is known that Štefánik did not sign the Declaration of Independence of the Czecho-Slovak Nation, as published on October 18, 1918, by Beneš in Paris and T. G. Masaryk in Washington. At that time Štefánik was outside Europe. His name was therefore simply written down by Beneš who was pre-supposing Štefánik's consent. Štefánik might have even admitted the western legal concept of a Czecho-Slovak nation consisting of citizens of various ethnic origins. But there are sources proving that his concept of unity of the Czecho-Slovak State did not imply the political and cultural absorption of the Slovaks by the Czechs.

In 1917, on a trip in the United States, Štefánik gave an interview to the publisher of the magazine "Slovenská mládež" (Slovak Youth), Pittsburgh, Pa. This interview, published in this magazine on November 15, 1917 (No. 7), reproduced the following passage from Štefánik's statement:

**"Slovakia has to maintain her cultural and linguistic character. There is no question about that and on this point — as well as on the question of autonomy of Slovakia, Moravia, Silesia and Bohemia — there is a complete agreement."** (1)

That was in fact a realistic evaluation of the situation, contrasting the wishful thinking theories of Masaryk and Beneš, and even of such Slovaks as Hodža, Dérier and Šrobár. In 1918, Woodrow Wilson pronounced in Congress the following significant words: **"Self-determination" is not a mere phrase. It is an imperative principle which statesmen will henceforth ignore at their peril.**"

#### **THE "Czechoslovak" Constitution of 1920**

The last paragraph of the Pittsburgh Agreement says: "Detailed regulations, concerning the establishment of the Czecho-Slovak State, are left to the liberated Czechs and Slovaks and their legal representatives." This places the

problem of the legal representation of Slovakia in the Constituent Assembly of Czecho-Slovakia in 1918-1920.

This serious problem, however, was resolved in a very simple way. The self-appointed revolutionary government of T. G. Masaryk and E. Beneš, after having returned to Prague in triumph from Paris, appointed a "Revolutionary Constituent Parliament of Czechoslovakia." In such a parliament the "deputies" for Slovakia formed the so-called Slovak Club which at the beginning of 1920 had 54 members. Who were they?

Twelve of those "Slovak" deputies were Czechs, including Mr. Beneš and Alice Masaryk, the daughter of the "President-Liberator." And of the remaining 42 Slovaks, there were only 8 autonomists. Of course, it would be difficult to find an objective key to these figures. But such was the will of the Prague Castle.

At the same time Štefánik died in a plane crash under mysterious circumstances. In fact, he was shot down, from the sky of Bratislava by a Czech anti-aircraft battery as he was returning home from Italy. Andrej Hlinka had been in the Mirov prison since October, 1919, after his courageous but unsuccessful trip to the Peace Conference in Paris, where he tried to defend Slovakia's political rights before the Supreme Council of the Allied and Associated Powers. Slovakia was occupied by Czech legions and Prague was threatening the Slovak People's Party with dissolution. Strong censorship of the press and a rigid police control of the Slovak People's Party gatherings were exercised by the Prague-imposed Czech authorities in Slovakia. Under terrific pressure, the six Slovak "autonomist" deputies could do nothing but vote for the Constitution, establishing the new State of the Czechs and Slovaks, but at the same time they delivered a statement in the Parliament reassuring the Slovak public that they would not cease in their struggle for the complete autonomy of Slovakia.

Thus, the "Czechoslovak" centralistic Constitution is far from being a result of what in America is known as a "due democratic process." It was a victory of narrow Czech nationalism over broad-minded Slovak federalism.

After this triumph, Prague proceeded to the first elections in Czecho-Slovakia! When one takes into consideration the conditions under which those elections were organized in Slovakia, there is no surprise in the fact that the Slovak People's Party was then placed in minority. The Czechs opened a full scale campaign for their various political parties, including the Communist-infiltrated Social-Democratic one. By new catchwords, they attempted to disorientate Slovak electors. Prague spent a lot of money in this "divide et impera" campaign, controlled the press by a draconian censorship, and Czech police and soldiers terrorized the population during the electoral campaign as well as on the day of the elections. In Rumanová, two men were killed by the police during a political gathering.

Fearful of the official Czech terrorism and trying to escape a concentrated attack from the side of the Czech "liberal" parties, Dr. Joseph Buday, who during the imprisonment of Hlinka had been the policymaker of the Slovak People's Party, agreed with the Czech People's Party of Msgr. J. Šramek to go into elections with his party under the common name of the "Czecho-Slovak People's Party." Slovak electors, however, did not understand the meaning of such an electoral coalition and, therefore, the Slovak People's Party got only 12 deputies, the Social Democrats 23, the Agrarians 12, other smaller parties 10.

In his commentary on the elections of April 1920, Dr. Ferdinand Juriga, on June 10, 1920, speaking for the Slovak People's Party, declared in the Prague Parliament:

"We do not regard the elections of April 18—20 as a free expression of the Slovak people. There were involved in them non-Slovak soldiers, non-Slovak officials, and other non-Slovak factors. A terrifying censorship, arbitrary imprisonment of our people and leaders prevent this act from expressing the free will of our population." (2)

It is significant to note how Czech "democracy" interpreted the principle of equality of citizens by the Law on Elections. While the Constitution introduced a rigid unified centralistic system for the whole Republic, the number of votes for the election of one deputy was

fixed at 43,840 in the Czech lands, at 53,384 in Slovakia, and at 78,538 in Subcarpathian Ruthenia. In this way the electoral district of Prague, with around one million population, had 45 deputies in the first Czecho-Slovak Parliament, while Subcarpathian Ruthenia, with a population of 750,000, had only 9.

The political terrorism exerted against the Slovak People's Party did not cease after the elections. On October 10, 1920, while this party held a political gathering in Námestovo, Czech soldiers shot into the assembly and killed two peasants. (3)

All this happened under a Constitution which guaranteed, for the consumption of Western scholars, "Czecho-slovak" citizens and all modern human and political rights.

That the Slovak People's Party of Hlinka did nevertheless vote for the election of Masaryk as president can mean only one thing: the political leadership of Hlinka's Party held a higher view of the interests of the newly-born Czecho-Slovak State than Mr. Edward Beneš, the narrow-minded Czech nationalist, whose political views on Central Europe had, up to that time, never extended beyond the frontiers of the former Bohemian Kingdom.

### **Slovakia's Reaction to Prague Centralism: Autonomism**

The Czech policy, aiming at the disintegration of the Slovak national individuality within the new Republic, awakened the self-preservation instincts of the Slovaks. In the elections of 1925, the Slovak People's Party gained 23 deputies. Since that year until the very end of Czecho-Slovakia that party remained not only the relatively strongest party in Slovakia, **but it managed to rally to its program the absolute majority of the Slovak voters.** Here, of course, nobody could consider as Slovak voters the members of the Magyar and German minorities, and the members of the Communist Party, because for these minorities Czecho-Slovakia was a foreign state.

While a good part of the Magyar intelligentsia served rather the cause of Hungarian irredenta and Magyar peasants in Slovakia sold their votes for certain economic advantages to the "Czechoslovak" Agrarian Party. Neither

was it possible to recognize any right of decision about Slovakia's political destinies to the Communists, who, preaching a World Proletarian State, were thereby against any national criterion in politics. Moreover, the Communist Party in Slovakia recruited its voters mostly from among the minority groups: Magyars, Czechs, Jews, etc. Thus, taking into consideration the electoral returns of 1925, from 58 deputies corresponding to Slovakia, 17 deputies were discounted as non-Slovak: 10 Magyars, 1 German and 6 Communists. Out of the remaining 41 deputies, the 22 corresponding to the Slovak People's Party is, in fact, a majority. The same can be said about the political structure of Slovakia's population in the elections of 1925 and 1929.

Because of the attractive force the Slovak People's Party exerted upon the Slovak population, Prague always sought to vilify this party by different accusations and denigrations. One of frequent accusations was that directed against Andrej Hlinka for having admitted "Magyarones" into the leading positions of the party. Such allegations were mostly connected with the name and activity of Vojtech Tuka. This former professor of International Law at Pécs University in Hungary had a Hungarian educational background, but his Slovak origin has never been doubted. When Czech authorities refused Tuka as professor for the "Czechoslovak" Komenský University in Bratislava, in 1920, he became a collaborator of Hlinka and, later, a deputy of the Slovak People's Party. In 1929, Tuka was accused for high treason and on the basis of false testimonies brought against him by witnesses who had been paid by the Czech secret police, he had been sentenced to 15 years in jail. It must not be forgotten, however, that in the decisive years, i.e., 1938 and 1939, when M. Horthy, regent of Hungary, did everything possible to get Hitler's consent to occupy Slovakia, Tuka was one of the most ardent promoters of a free Slovak State.

What connections are there between Catholicism and autonomism in Slovakia? Catholicism is the religion of some 82 percent of the entire population; it is the original religion of the country. The first Catholic church was con-

structed in Slovakia in 833, in Nitra, by Prince Pribina, i.e., decades earlier than in any other Central European country. in contradistinction to that, Protestantism, which now represents about 14 percent of the population in Slovakia, is a Czech and German ideological importation. It happened that after the White Mountain debacle many Czech Protestants settled in Slovakia and, even though after a certain time they adopted the Slovak language, they did not rid themselves of the nostalgia for their Czech origin and their Czech cultural background. It is not without interest to quote what Bohuslav Tablic (1769—1832), a prominent Slovak Protestant, wrote about that Czech religious emigration in Slovakia:

“When in 1620, after that fatal battle on White Mountain, it had come to a large emigration among the Czechs for religious reasons, more than thirty thousands of these emigrants, Czechs and Moravians, found refuge in Hungary and Poland. They settled in scattered farming groups among the Slovaks in Nitra county in view of being able to return easily from there back to their native country in order to take care of their derelinquished belongings or to visit their friends, or, the storm of persecution once over, to be able to simply return home with their whole furnishings. However, when they lost the hope of returning back to their fatherland and having in the meantime bought settlements, lands and pastures, and other lands, they found security under the protection of big landowners in the settlements of Myjava, Vrbové, Lubina, Stará Turá, etc.” (4)

This is the historical explanation of the “Czechoslovak” orientation of many Slovak Protestants, such as Milan Hodža, Method Bella, Milan Ivanka, Ivan Dérer, George Slávik, Stephen Osuský, John Papánek, Joseph Lettrich, Stephen Kočvara, Martin Kvetko, Fedor Hodža and Samuel Belluš.

It must be stated, however, that not all Slovak Protestants have been or are orientated toward political and cultural “Czechoslovakism.” We can mention the name of Louis Štúr, Charles Kuzmány, Svetozár Hurban Vajanský,



Joseph Škultéty, Martin Rázus, Emil Stodola, etc., all of them Slovak Protestants who have written brilliant pages of Slovak national history. In reminiscences of the Slovak people they enjoy the same consideration as any great Catholic personality.

One reality must be particularly stressed in this respect: **differences between Catholics and Protestants in Slovakia have never been of a dogmatical or religious nature.** They have their proper explanations in the different origin and cultural background of the Slovak Protestants. The great majority of the Slovak population thinks, however, that the Protestant minority did not rightly understand their role in their adoptive country. Sometimes they closely approached the attitude that may easily be qualified as a "double loyalty" and at other times they were openly active like a sort of Czech cultural, and in the last 50 years even Czech political fifth column in Slovakia. There is a general agreement in the democratic world that the human rights of racial and religious minorities should be protected. But it would be far from political wisdom, if a religious minority, against the general political evolution of their adoptive country, tried to politically substitute themselves for the nation whose hospitality they had accepted. One can imagine the reaction of American Protestants and Jews, if the Catholic minority in the USA had sought to convert America into an Irish, Roman, Italian, Spanish or Polish colony.

### Conclusion

The Slovak problem is what it has always been: an effort to get rid of the domination of all smaller or bigger neighbors: Magyars, Czechs, Germans, Russians. Federalization of Europe is necessary, because that is the way to eliminate feudalism in international relations and bring about democracy there. The Slovaks are disposed to sacrifice certain of their rights in favor of a European Federation, such as foreign policy, defense, economy, but they are not disposed to sacrifice their fundamental national rights or their individuality in favor of a Central European foreign nationalism.

This is in substance the reason why the Slovaks in Slovakia are refusing to recognize the political leadership of Karel Bacílek, a Czech Communist. This man has been sent to Slovakia as Acting Secretary General of the Communist Party in order to break the resistance of the population against Prague and Communism. Having hanged Vladimír Clementis and imprisoned other Slovak "deviationists," like Gustáv Husák and Laco Novomeský, etc., Prague took over control of Slovakia by a man who had been Minister of State Security.

For the same reason the Slovaks in the free world could never recognize the leadership of some Beneš-inspired old Pan-Czech politicians, like Peter Zenkl, Hubert Ripka, and others. But the Slovaks would be delighted to collaborate as equals with the Czechs who adopt as their program the equality of peoples within a Federated Europe.

(1) Quoted in "Juhoamerický Slovák," Buenos Aires, May, 1955.

(2) K. Sidor: *The Slovaks on the floor of the Prague Parliament*, Bratislava, 1943, Vol. 1, p. 144.

(3) *Ibidem*: pp. 163—165.

(4) Quoted in: "Hlasové o potrebe jednoty spisovného jazyka pro Čechy, Moravany, a Slováky," Praha, 1846, p. 102.

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#### WHO SAID IT?

"It is an incontestable fact that from 1945 to 1948 there was no democracy in Czecho-Slovakia. After February 25, 1948, when the Communists were no more in want of the services of their fellow-travelers from other National Front parties, they realized with the full aid of Dr. Beneš their famous February "coup d'état" (Dr. Beneš remained president till June 1948). One part of the National Front, led by Clement Gottwald, remained in the country, where it is still terrorizing our nation. Another part, led by Dr. Zenkl, went into exile, where it was organized in the so-called "Council of Free Czechoslovakia." Both parts are united by the same "government-program of Košice." Today Red Prague as well as the Council of Free Czechoslovakia are still followers of that program." — (The Czech "BOHEMIA," Nov. 1952).

## MEMORANDUM

**TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES FROM THE PITTSBURGH-JOHNSTOWN, PA. REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE SLOVAK LEAGUE OF AMERICA, SLOVAK BAND HALL, JOHNSTOWN, PA., NOVEMBER 3, 1956**

Assembled in the Slovak Band Hall, in the interest of the welfare and security of our America and the rest of the free world, we solemnly declare that:

1. We rededicate ourselves to the preservation of the basic principles set forth in the American Declaration of Independence and of the basic law of our country, the Constitution of the United States of America.

2. We condemn all forms of tyranny, every form of totalitarian political system. We recognize the godless philosophy of materialistic communism as the greatest conspiracy against free humanity, as a political system which threatens all of mankind with utter enslavement. Therefore we cannot subscribe to the policy that doing business with the Soviet Union and its satellites is in the best interests of the welfare and security of the United States and the rest of the free world.

We commend our Government for its efforts to resist and to resolutely counteract the aggressive policies of Soviet imperialism with all the spiritual and material forces at our command and heartily endorse all actions of our Government to expose, demobilize, and outlaw the evil forces of brutal godless Communism in our country — the forces that are dedicated to our destruction.

3. We strongly denounce the intervention of the Soviet Union in the internal affairs of Poland and Hungary, as well as other countries of Europe and Asia. We express our deepest sympathy with the peoples of Hungary and Poland and urge our Government to denounce in the strongest terms the massacre of these liberty-loving and liberty-seeking peoples, immediately initiating all steps that may be taken by our Government to end the brutal treatment and repression of the Polish and Hungarian nations.

4. We oppose the admission of Red China into the United Nations. We fully endorse the principle that our Government shall refuse to recognize every form of government and political formation which is imposed on any nation by the force of an alien power and we respectfully request that this policy be followed even in the case of the nation we are descended from, the Slovak nation, which is tyrannized by the Czecho-Communist regime of Prague in flagrant violation of the political will of the Slovak people and of the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations and in utter contempt for the basic principle of the American foreign policy of self-determination.

Once again, we respectfully request the President and the Congress of the United States to re-examine the question of the destruction of the Slovak Republic in 1945, because we are certain that the political will of the Slovak nation was violated. We also respectfully request our President to instruct our delegate to the United Nations to ask for an investigation by the U. N. of the destruction of the Slovak State in 1945, the independence of which was proclaimed by the duly elected representatives of the Slovak people on March 14, 1939, and eventually recognized by twenty-seven countries.

5. We deeply resent the fact that our Government is inclined to recognize and favor former Slovak and Czech politicians who are in a large measure responsible for the present terrible plight of the Slovaks and the Czechs. We refer particularly to the politicians who promoted the pro-Soviet and anti-Slovak policies of the late Dr. Edward Beneš — the Czech Socialists and Judas Slovaks, now organized in the so-called "Council of Free Czechoslovakia," who collaborated with Moscow and the Communists until 1948 as members of the Communist-dominated National Front Government of the Beneš-Gottwald coalition.

We respectfully request the President and the Congress of the United States to re-examine the so-called "Czechoslovak" policy of our Government, which is still based on the information and actions of Dr. Edward Beneš

and other Czech Socialists. It is embarrassing to us, as it also should be to our Government, that the members of Beneš's pro-Soviet political clique are employed by various departments and agencies of our Government. They have compromised the good name of the United States entirely too long and, therefore, should no longer enjoy our trust and favor.

The Slovak League of America, with the organizations affiliated with it, has expressed itself in the past more than once on the subject of U. S. policy in regard to Czecho-Slovakia, and especially in regard to the Slovak nation, but little or nothing has been done to correct the situation. Representing the vast majority of organized Americans of Slovak descent, the Slovak League of America feels that it has the right and the obligation to speak for them in matters of general and particular concern, both domestic and foreign. As loyal Americans, we are not, we trust, overly presumptuous in assuming that we merit at least the same measure of consideration and trust from our Government as the bankrupt, pro-Soviet political entourage of Dr. Edward Beneš, which suddenly became "anti-Communist and democratic" after February, 1948. when the Communists, with their collaboration, seized all power in Czecho-Slovakia.

6. We stand opposed to the concept that the power and size of the federal government of the United States should be increased to the detriment of the powers of the individual States of the Union. We, therefore, respectfully request the adoption of the recommendations of the Hoover Commission as speedily as possible.

7. Furthermore, we respectfully request the President and the Congress of the United States to promote legislation to decrease federal taxes, particularly the income tax and withholding tax laws during the next session of Congress, because we believe this can be done without endangering the welfare and security of our country.

8. Finally, we recommend the President of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower, for his stand on the crisis in the Middle East to oppose and condemn all aggressors and violators of others natural rights

Adopted unanimously this third day of November 1956, by the Conference of the Pittsburgh-Johnstown, Pa. Region of the Slovak League of America, Slovak Band Hall, Johnstown, Pa.

For the Conference:

PHILIP A. HROBAK, President  
Slovak League of America.

ELIZABETH ANDREJKO, Chairlady  
of Conference and president of Johnstown Assembly S. L. A.

MICHAEL BEREŠ, Chairman  
Pittsburgh District S. L. A.

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#### WHO SAID IT?

"Never in history was Russia so mighty, never were the forces of socialism so colossally forged together. This is a new historical epoch. Nevertheless some people think in a stick-in-the-mud fashion. It has not yet been possible to convince everyone of the necessity for the overthrow of capitalism." — (Ferdinand Peroutka, a Beneš Czech, in his book **TAK NEBO TAK**, 1947, pg. 8).

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"The gossip that the Democratic Party is not for co-operation with the Soviet Union is wrong. It is clear to every Slovak, regardless of his political and religious beliefs, that the existence of the Czechoslovak Republic is 100 per cent dependent on the existence and the power of our strongest Slavic ally. This alliance cannot be regarded as a matter of only feeling gracious for everything the Soviet Union has done for us. It is a matter of rational thinking and of our unalterable foreign policy." — (Dr. Joseph Lettrich, Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee of the "Council of Free Czechoslovakia," **NOVÉ PRŮDY**, No. 28-29, 1947, pg. 658).

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"Let us declare war against the fear of Bolshevism and forbid at the same time, the formation of any anti-Communist front whatsoever." — (Vaclav Majer, **PRAVO LIDU**, official organ of the Czech Social Democratic Party, November 25, 1947)



## WHY DID BENEŠ RESIGN IN 1938?

P. A. Hrobak

This question still puzzles many people. Beneš himself, both in his letter to the government and in his speech to the people in parting, told why he had resigned, but he told it in such a way that it is not fully clear to the average person. To say it simply and briefly: Beneš resigned because the policy of which he himself had been the chief exponent and representative for twenty years had proved faulty; it went bankrupt and he could, therefore, no longer remain at the head of the State.

He himself told it in this manner:

"I had played so great a role in this development of events that I had to contemplate seriously what my duty should be under changed circumstances. . . . I came into office under entirely different circumstances; and I must reckon this actuality. Circumstances have changed so completely, that I feel my remaining in office might create an obstacle in the new circumstances with which our State is now coping. . . This is mainly so, as it concerns the international situation with a view towards the speedy building up of cooperation with our neighbors" — (In a letter to Premier General Syrový).

"I have reached my decision of my own free will and in accordance with my personal conviction after consultation with political and constitutional circles and with a number of other leading persons. . . In these circumstances I think it is advisable that the new developments and the new European collaboration should not be disturbed from our side through the fact that the personal position of its leading representative apparently constitutes an obstacle to this development. I was elected to my present position at a time substantially different from the present." — (Farewell Broadcast, Oct. 5, 1938: MEMOIRS, 1954, pp. 292-293).

What these words of Beneš actually meant will, perhaps, be best explained by a few quotations from Czech periodicals of 1938:

"Of necessity our future program contains good relations with Germany — **a program which we could have adopted long ago**, if it were not for the 'cavalierish' Western Powers which threatened to break off their alliance with us in such an event" — Stanislav Yester, "**Lidové Noviny**, Oct. 5).

"Venkov" called for new, friendly contacts with neighboring states, and asked for "awakening from dreams into reality and the acceptance of a program which will be ours."

"We do not know what will come next in Europe. We do know, however, that near us is a power with which our state cannot allow itself to come into dispute. Long enough already have we played for others the role of a gendarme who keeps Germany in check: when the crucial moment came, we found ourselves deserted — alone. . . Well, good. If the world is to be governed not by justice, but by force, then our place is with those who have the greater strength and are more decisive. Nothing else remains for us. We look for unity with Germany. . . And let us become, like Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, one of Germany's large providers and buyers, and let us refuse to enter into a combination of any kind, in which we would become part of an anti-German front. We are now thinking only of ourselves and let us be loyal only to ourselves" — ("**Lidové Noviny**," Oct. 5).

"We have already had more than enough of the wailing sympathy of the western states 'towards that courageous little nation.' . . . We call beyond our borders: Put an end to your unwelcome manifestations of sympathy towards Czecho-Slovakia. We are finally realizing what our standing in Central Europe is, and we shall guide ourselves accordingly, whether you like it or not. Our nation bears its defeat and humiliation not only with pain, but with great pride. We had been betting on the wrong horse, and we know how to take the necessary consequences" — ("**Lidové Listy**," Oct. 5).

We see that one after the other they admit to the fault of Czecho-Slovakia's twenty-year foreign policy. But

who was it that determined the trend of Czecho-Slovakia's foreign policy for twenty years? Of course, it was Beneš!

It was Beneš who made Czecho-Slovakia wholly dependent upon the love of France and England, and it was Beneš who did not permit Czecho-Slovakia to attempt to make friends with Germany, as Bulgaria and Yugoslavia had done. It was Beneš who made of Czecho-Slovakia a French gendarme to stand guard over Germany; and it was Beneš who did not know how to rouse himself from a dream and open his eyes to the reality that France and England did not know how to deal with Germany. It was Beneš who obstinately held Czecho-Slovakia in that anti-German front. It was Beneš who bet on the wrong horse. And finally, it was Beneš who paid no heed to the warnings coming from the Slovak autonomist camp (Populists and Nationalists), but also from Czech sources (Kramář and others): that the foreign policy of Czecho-Slovakia was dangerous and against her interests.

Under such circumstances, when his blundering foreign policy contributed in no small measure to what had happened, Beneš could do nothing else but resign. Of course, his apologists may say that Beneš meant well, that he did not wish the State ill, but he was too trusting, since he depended upon the alliance with France; and, perhaps, he was not foresighted enough, since he did not see long ago, in spite of numerous and repeated warnings, which way the European wind was blowing.

People noticed it in Yugoslavia, they noticed it in Bulgaria, they noticed it in Roumania and they noticed it also in Poland — and they went with the wind. Beneš did not notice it; he went against the wind. And when he did begin to notice that things were going bad, he committed the cardinal error of not turning about quickly, but against the wind even more — and concluded a military pact with Soviet Russia! That was the red cloth before the already irritated dictators, Hitler and Mussolini. And England, when it came to deciding for or against war, was filled with fear that, if there should be a war, Central

Europe would be over-run by Stalin's red army, which nobody, perhaps, could ever drive out of it.

When Beneš departed, there left with him twenty years of faulty Czecho-Slovak foreign policy. As we see from quotations above, it has already been admitted also by those who approved of his policy and supported it. And with Beneš there also departed twenty years of faulty internal policy, for let us not forget that Beneš was one of the most leading exponents of "Czechoslovak" national unity and the greatest opponent of Slovak autonomy. The Czechs also noticed this fault of internal policy, but did not profit by it any more than T. G. Masaryk and Beneš did by the lesson of Austro-Hungary. Perhaps it was too late to do anything about the malignant cancer which had been planted in the political life of Czecho-Slovakia, which, like Austro-Hungary, had become a prison to non-Czech nations. T. G. Masaryk and Dr. Edward Beneš had founded Czecho-Slovakia on a lie, built it on more lies and inequities, but still loudly proclaimed on every occasion that the "truth prevails"! Well, truth did prevail, despite the hypocrisy of the Czech founders of the Republic.

Beneš resigned the presidency and fled the country during its first great crisis, because he was a coward. He did wrong and he knew it. His people knew it, too. He capitulated to Hitler, accepting Munich without even consulting the parliament of Czecho-Slovakia. Had he not fled, who knows but that Beneš might have been tried for treason and hung in 1938 by his own people?

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#### WHO SAID IT?

"New Czecho-Slovakia will be a Slav state which, while having good relations with the great western democracies, will politically, economically, militarily and culturally lean without any reservations on the victorious bulwark of Slav peoples, the USSR, and cooperate with the Slav and democratic states of Poland and the Yugoslav federation of states." — **Laco Novomeský**, deputy-chairman of the Slovak National Council, headed by Dr. Joseph Lettrich, OWI Bulletin, May 26, 1945.

## **The History of Slovakia:**

By PHILIP A. HROBAK

### **SLOVENSKO — SLOVAKIA — SLOVAKLAND**

The territory occupied by the Slovak people for the past 1500 years is known as Slovakia. It is situated in the very heart of Europe. Present-day Slovakia has an area of 49,015 square kilometers (approximately 19,000 sq. miles) and a population of 4,000,000. There were times when the borders of Slovakia extended beyond their present limits and times when the land of the Slovaks had no definite borders at all.

In ancient times the Slovaks occupied even the western bank of the Morava river and the north bank of the Tisa (Theiss) river. Though the area and the borders of Slovakia changed at various times, its topography — the land and its waterways — did not.

Slovakia is bound on the north by the Carpathian Mountains and on the south by the blue Danube and the upper arm of the Tisa river. Into these two streams empty all the rivers of Slovakia that have their origin in the foothills of the King's Plateau (Kráľova Hoľa) — the natural center of Slovakia: those that run off to the southwest empty into the Danube, while those that course to the southwest pour into the Tisa, forming deep valleys and broad basins between the individual mountain zones that fill out the largest part of the territory of Slovakia.

This territory is divided into three parts: 1. western Slovakia which drains into the Danube tributaries; 2. eastern Slovakia that drains into the tributaries of the Tisa; 3. the mountainous country of central Slovakia.

The geographical picture of Slovakia is extremely varied, because high mountain ranges alternate with deep valleys which, in places, spread out into basins. Fertile plains stretch out from the foothills of the mountains.

Slovakia is situated in the very center of Europe where the north-eastern spurs of the Alps near the central Danube touch upon the mountainous arch of the Carpa-

thians which is the main watershed of central Europe. From this watershed the streams of central Europe run into several seas. In olden times the course of these streams determined the course of roads along which nations migrated and business and culture flowed. We find Slovakia at the junction of these roads which cross the Carpathian Mountains from the north and the south.

Two roads were especially significant in deciding the fate of Slovakia and the Slovak nation. One coursed along the Danube and connected the western countries of Europe with the eastern world. Near the Carpatho-Alpian gate this road intersected with the other important highway which started from the coast of the Adriatic Sea, crossed the Danube, proceeded to the north against the current of the Morava river and went to the coast of the Baltic Sea.

Slovakia, according to archeological researches, was well inhabited as early as 5000 B. C., but we do not know the race or the names of the peoples who inhabited the land. Traces of the Neolithic Man, who used stone weapons in hunting the mammoth and the huge cave bear, have been found. The scientific investigator will find much material on the prehistoric period in the museum of Bratislava and Turčiansky Svätý Martin.

About the year 2000 B.C. begins the Bronze Age with its burial urns, and clay and stone remains, found on the sites of ancient settlements in Slovakland. During the ensuing Iron Age, we find traces of the Illyrians in the west, of the Thracians in the east. The latter came into contact with the Scythians in the valley of the Tisa river.

Several nations of various origins and culture lived in Slovakia just before the dawn of the Christian era. According to ancient Greek and Roman writers, the land of the Slovaks was inhabited by the Gauls and the Celts at that time. In the fourth century B. C., we note traces of the more advanced Gallic culture from the discoveries of golden ornaments and coins, imitations of those issued by Philip III of Macedonia and his son, Alexander the Great. At Bratislava coins of the Roman Republic, dating from the first century B. C., have been found. A Greek map of the Slovak territory, dating back to the third century,



shows many Slovanic names for mountains and rivers,

The fertile plains of south-eastern Slovakia were occupied by the Boii, a Gallic tribe, and in the mountainous parts of central Slovakia lived the Kotin (Gothine) tribe which worked the ore of the Iron Mountains. The Osi settled in the neighborhood of the Kotins, while the Korkonti — tribes of southern origin — occupied the northwestern part of Slovakia.

In the first half of the last century before Christ the Dacians came to Slovakia from the east and overpowered the Gallic Boii. But in the first quarter of the first century after Christ, the Dacians were forced to migrate to the north into the mountains, because they were hard pressed by the Jazygi who had come from the Black Sea to take over the land on the left side of the Danube.

During the reign of Tiberius, two Germanic tribes settled in the territory of the Slovaks, the Quadi and the Marcomanni, who frequently raided the Roman province of Pannonia on the other side of the Danube. Vannius, the bellicose king of the Quadi, built military fortresses along the Váh river and extended his power to the Turiec and Kysuca rivers.

About twenty years after Christ, when a large part of the territory of Slovakia was occupied by the Quadi, the Romans were consolidating their might near the Danube. The Franks and the Romans began to wage war for the control of the territory of Slovakia, a struggle that lasted several centuries.

South of the Danube the Romans organized the province of Pannonia, east of which was the province of Dacia. To conquer the whole Danube basin to the Carpathians, the Romans built military strongholds along the south bank of the Danube. Such fortresses were established at Vindobona (Vienna), Carnanthum (Hainburg), Brigetium (Komárno) and at Aquincum (Budapest). To defend and to secure the frontier along the Danube against incursions of barbaric tribes, the Romans sent detachments across the river to established military stations on the northern bank, on the territory of Slovakia. From excavations we know that Ro-

man troops were stationed at Devín, Stupava, Bratislava and opposite Komárno at Iž.

The Romans bested the Quadi in battle. Their king Vannius ruled over the territory of Slovakia by the grace of the Roman Emperor. Of course, the Quadi resented this. After Vannius' death the aggressive Quadi challenged the power of the Romans on the Danube and the Roman Emperors had to defend their rule with large armies. Along the Váh river the Roman troops penetrated as far as Trenčín. Emperor Marcus Aurelius and his son Commodus defeated the Quadi in 179 A. D. after several bloody skirmishes on Slovak territory, as is commemorated by inscription on a rock at Trenčín: "In memory of the victory of the Emperor's army that encamped at Laugaricio, 855 soldiers of the II. Legion. Made by Constantine, commander of the II. auxiliary Legion." This army was stationed at Laugaritio, a Roman settlement near Trenčín, which has since disappeared.

During these skirmishes with the Quadi, probably about 173 A. D., the Roman army in Slovakia found itself threatened by a scarcity of water. In the army that fought against the Germans somewhere along the Hron river, there were several Christians who had come from Asia Minor. These Christian soldiers — the first Christians on Slovak territory — prayed for rain and their prayers were answered. The Roman army was saved. This incident is immortalized on the Arch of Triumph of Emperor Marcus Aurelius in Rome.

The Quadi, beaten repeatedly by the Romans, never gave up trying to drive the Romans out of Slovakia. Emperor Constantine II defeated them in 258 A.D. and Emperor Valentinian, the last Roman emperor who could claim sovereignty over the territory of Slovakia, repeated the performance in 374. Upon the latter's death in 375, the great Migration of Nations began. Shortly thereafter the Romans pulled their garrisons out of Slovakia and let the Quadi take over. The Quadi, however, were evicted from the territory by the Huns in the first half of the fifth century. The Huns in turn were displaced by the Heruli, who held the territory until about 491 when the Lombards defeated

them, occupied their lands and held them until about 526, when they crossed the Danube into Pannonia.

Slovakia, however, did not remain even under the Huns for long. After the disintegration of the Roman Empire, the Germans migrated from Slovakia to the south. The Marcomanni, weakened by the wars with the Romans and forced by the hordes of Attila to join his army, were wiped out in the battle of Châlons (Catalaunian Fields) in 451. There is as yet no definite proof, even though it may be safely assumed, that the Slovaks and related Slovanic tribes came into Slovakia in increasing numbers after the extinction of the Marcomanni. The historian Jordannes, writing in the sixth century, said that all the Hungarian plain was inhabited by Slovanic people (the Slavs).

#### AFTER THE ADVENT OF THE SLOVAKS

The Slovaks came to their present territory from the East, probably from India. At the time Frankish tribes fought the Roman Legions over the territory of Slovakia, the Slovanic peoples occupied the land that stretched to the north of the Carpathians and to the east of the river Vistula. It was a marshy and unfertile land. In time the growing Slovanic families were forced to emigrate to neighboring territories.

The Slovanic peoples who migrated to the west and occupied the territory to the Elbe and Saal rivers are called Western Slavs; they are the Poles, the Slovaks and the Czechs; those that occupied the territory between the Elbe and Oder rivers and the country along the coast of the Baltic Sea are known as the Lusatian Serbs (northern Germany) and the Kashubes (near the Baltic Sea); today their numbers are few. The Slovanic peoples, who migrated from their ancient land to the south and occupied the Balkan peninsula, are called the Southern Slavs: the Slovenes, Croatians, Serbs and Bulgarians. A large part of the Slovanic peoples migrated to the east and occupied the plains of eastern Europe. They are the Eastern Slavs: the White Russians, the Little Russians (Ukrainians) and the Great Russians.

As the great Slovanic family disintegrated, separate

Slovanic nations developed with the centuries, each with its distinct culture, language, customs and traditions.

The Slovaks, like other Slovanic peoples, originally were hunters. After a time they took to bee culture and animal husbandry, especially sheep raising. From their neighbors they learned to cultivate the soil. The men folk hunted and herded sheep, while the women and the slaves did the farm work. The only trades known to them were pottery making and blacksmithing. In business transactions they exchanged products or paid in cloth; money was not known as a means of barter. The Slovaks lived in simple huts made of poles driven into the ground, around which were wound branches and twigs which were then covered with mud.

Several families, originating from a common forefather, formed a clan ("rod"). The head of the clan was the oldest member; he was in charge of the common property of the clan. A Slovanic settlement, inhabited by several related families, i.e. a clan, was called a village ("dedina" from "dedo"—grandfather). The village was the common heritage ("dedičstvo") of the whole clan. Several related clans made up a tribe ("kmeň"), the leader of which was the tribal chief, called a priest ("kňaz") or prince ("knieža"). When several such related tribes lived in one territory for a long time a Slovanic state evolved and a Slovanic nation was born.

#### SLOVAK CHARACTERISTICS

The Slovanic peoples had many good and bad characteristics. They loved songs and entertainment. Not possessing great wealth, they lived frugally. They were goodhearted and hospitable, but suffered discipline with difficulty. They did not know how to obey, hence there was no harmony among them. They did not seek a battle, but when they had to defend themselves they fought heroically and also knew how to be cruel. All these characteristics of the Slovanic nature can be found in the Slovanic nations even at the present time.

The historian Procopius (562) said that the Slavs were rather tall, hardy, blond-haired people and honesty was one

of their marked characteristics. Theophylactus recorded an interesting commentary on the Slavs. He said: "In 590 three men were captured by the Greeks in Thrace; the men carried musical instruments instead of weapons. When Caesar Mauricus asked who they were, the men answered: 'We are Slavs; we love music; we play the guitar and violin and sing.' Mauricus was overcome by their simplicity. After feasting them he had a guard escort them to their lands."

The German historian Herder had this to say about the Slavs: "They loved farming; they had herds and implements and a home industry; with the products of their land and their industry they carried on a useful business. They built cities and in places occupied themselves with mining; they knew how to melt and mold metals. The Slavs prepared salt, made cloth, brewed beer, grafted trees, and lived according to their manner a happy, musical life."

The Slovaks of old had names for implements, furniture, grains, fruit trees, trades and animals. They had their own words for: plow, iron, cloth, needle, pliers, wheel, wagon, seal, ring, blacksmith, spoon, clothier, butcher, cape, jeweler.

As a musical people they had many folk songs. In number and variety of content they are second to those of no other nation.

#### SLOVAK MYTHOLOGY

There are very few reliable records of the religion of ancient Slovanic peoples. We know that they believed in a Supreme Being and in immortality. The Slovaks called the Supreme Being "**Praboh**" — the God of all gods. They had a White God — the God of all good, and a Black God — the God of evil and death. Many lesser gods, belonging to both the white and black groups, also existed for the ancient Slovaks and other Slovanic peoples.

"**ŽIVENA**" was the goddess of life, and "**MORENA**" the goddess of death. Brooks and streams housed nymphs, and fairies inhabited the woods and forests. "**LADA**" was the goddess of beauty, while "**ŮRODA**" was the goddess of the fields and crops. "**PERŮN**" (**PAROM**"), the God of thunder, was held in great respect.

The ancient Slovaks worshipped and invoked their gods in sacred groves. They offered sacrifices of grain and animals to images of wood and stone through their priests. The White Priests (Bielokňazi) served and invoked the White Gods. The White Priests were most important men of the tribe; they presided at all councils and trials and their judgments and decisions were final. The Black Priests — the magicians and sorcerers — were believed to possess powers of transforming persons into animals and inanimate objects.

The Slovaks, like most of the other Slovanic peoples of ancient times, cremated or buried their dead. Food, weapons, wine and jewelry were usually placed in the graves of the dead. Ashes of the dead were placed in urns of clay and then buried. Mounds of clay and stone were built over burial places; the greater the mound, the more important the person or persons buried there. Several such mounds were found and excavated in Slovakia (at Skalica, Brezolupy, Bánovce, Krasňany near Žilina and at Čepčín in Turiec). One of the most extensive burial grounds was uncovered at Devínska Nová Ves.

Some of the customs and practices of the ancient pagan Slovaks have survived the centuries and are still observed in many quaint villages of Slovakia today. Many of the pagan practices, however, disappeared with the advent of Christianity.

As the Slovanic peoples abandoned their ancient lands and began to colonize central and eastern Europe — after the Germanic Heruli and Lombards withdrew from the territory of Slovakia in the sixth century and the Slovaks came in — the savage nation of the Avars tore into the Danube basin, overran the whole territory, and pushed deeply into the Frankish kingdom in the west. During the next hundred years the whole region seethed in turmoil.

The Avars were wild nomads of Turko-Tartarian origin who rode their horses rough-shod over the countries of their neighbors and subjugated them. They settled in Pannonia, where they built military camps which were protected by huge, circular mounds of earth and stone and wooden fences. The Slovaks withdrew from this territory



and settled north of the Danube. Part of the Slovak tribes lived in the mountains; they were governed by their own princes.

The Slovanic peoples along the Danube had to serve the Avars and were forced to go with them on their rampages into neighboring territories. The Avars looted the German lands in the west and Constantinople (Carihrad) and Salonika in the east. Naturally, the Slovanic peoples wanted to throw off the yoke of the Avars and waited for the opportune moment to rebel. That time came in 624, when Samo, a Frankish merchant, succeeded in uniting the Slovanic peoples and led them in battle against the savage Avars. Samo defeated the Avars and founded the first Slovanic state near the central Danube. Encouraged by the victory over the Avars, Samo led the Slovanic peoples against the Germanic Franks. Samo again was victorious; his Slovanic army defeated the Franks under Dagobert in a three-day battle near the Vogaste castle in 631. Because the Slovaks were settled north of the Danube and the Slovenians south of it, Samo's empire stretched over these territories. The Slovanic peoples within these territories were called by the common name of Slovenes (*Slovieni*). The main fortress of this Slovanic empire was situated in Slovakia at the confluence of the Morava and Danube rivers. Samo's empire, however, disintegrated soon after his death (658). Whether it was the kingdom of the Slovaks alone is questionable, but the fact remains that the territory of Slovakia formed the core of it.

Fredegar's "Chronicles" record that a strong western-Slovanic empire existed already in the seventh century, strong enough to resist the pressure of the Avars and the rule of Dagobert. Fredegar wrote quite plainly that Samo came along when the Slovanic tribes of the area were successfully rebelling against the rule of the Avars. His "Chronicles" form the basis of most theories in regard to the ethnical composition of Samo's Empire, its territorial extent and the site of its principal city or stronghold. In recent years Slovak, Polish, and Czech scholars of Slavistics agreed that Samo's stronghold, the center of his empire, was at Devín, at the confluence of the Morava and Danube rivers.

Professor Oettinger, well-known historian and archeologist of Vienna, however, prefers to regard Vienna as the center of Samo's Empire. In his book "Das Warden Wiens" (1951), he tells that he bases his conclusion especially on the findings resulting from the discovery of the ancient Berghof Castle in Vienna, the remains of which can be traced to Samo's time. The Avars, a nomadic people, could not build such a great citadel of stone. Presenting a whole series of philological arguments to back his theory, professor Oettinger states that it is self-evident that Slovaks and possibly other Slovanic peoples lived in the area of Vienna and far to the west along the Danube territory during Samo's time.

While the Slovanic peoples were resisting the Avars heroically, a strong Frankish empire was being built in the west. The power of this empire, whose borders in the eighth century extended from the Pyrenees to the Šumava River, became consolidated especially during the reign of Charles the Great (Charlemagne), who ruled from 768 to 814, and united all the Germanic tribes, subjugated the Bavarians and the Saxons in the east, and came into contact with the most westerly tribes of the Slovans. In 799 the armies of Charlemagne defeated the Avars, who later were absorbed by the Slovanic inhabitants of the Danube countries.

But the great empire of Charlemagne, who became Emperor in 800, had another weapon besides its strong army for its aggressions into the neighboring countries of the east. That weapon was Christianity, which in the Frankish empire had spread and become so strong that already during the reign of Charlemagne the way was prepared for it to reach the Danubian Slovans who were settled along the eastern borders of the Frankish empire.

To safeguard the eastern frontier of his empire, Charlemagne placed heavy military garrisons along bordering countries. Such territories were called "Marks" and were managed by so-called "Markgraves." In a short time it became evident that the military garrisons of such Marks were not only for defense, but also for advance into the neighboring Slovanic countries. Contemporaneously new bishoprics and monasteries were built along these bordering countries which strengthened the Christian faith and

propagated Christian culture. It was thus that Christianity came to the neighboring Slovanic nations.

Slovakia already in the very beginning of the ninth century came into immediate contact with the military and cultural might of the Frankish empire. The Slovak nation crossed the threshold of its national and cultural history.

#### PRINCE PRIBINA

The Slovanic tribes, which settled on the northern bank of the Danube, on both sides of the Morava river, were called Moravians. Philologists, historians, and archeologists have amply demonstrated that whatever had been mentioned in old historical documents about the Moravians referred in fact to the ancestors of the Slovaks, the Slovans (Slavs) who already in the first half of the ninth century were the inhabitants of the territory on both sides of the Morava river.

In ancient documents we find the name "Slovenica" used interchangeably with "Moravia" and "Magna Moravia" to designate the territory on both sides of the Morava river. A document of King Louis from the year 861 also calls that area "Slovenica." In western (Latin) sources, the inhabitants of that territory were called "Moravians" and "the Slavs of Moravia" (Slavi; Sclavi; Schlavi; Sclavi Marahenses; Marehenses; Maravi; Maravani; Moravi; Marabi; Marahavi; Sclavini; Sclavi Margenses) to distinguish them from the Slovans (Slavs) who had occupied other territories (Behemi; Sclavi Bohemia; Boemie; Beheimi; Boemani; Boemanici; Behemani; Bohemani; Bulgari; Vulgari; Chrobati; Belochrobati; Kosari; Czech; Poloni; Russi; etc.). In eastern sources, however, the inhabitants of the same territory were called "Slovenes" (Slovieni; Slověni), while their land was referred to as "Slovak Land" and "Moravia" (Slověnska zemlja; Morava). It is significant that after the fall of Great Moravia, her inhabitants were referred to by their ancient name: Slavi; Sclavi; Slovieni; Sloveni — older forms of the term Slovak, which began to appear only after the fifteenth century.

From reliable sources we learn that about the year 830, there ruled in Slovakia a prince named Pribina, who resided in Nitra. The name Pribina and Nitra are very dear

to the hearts of all Slovaks, because Pribina is the name of the first Slovak ruler ever mentioned by history, and Nitra is the name of the first Slovak castle which became the cradle of Slovak national history. Pribina reigned in Nitra and his principality extended over the territory of the fertile basin of the Nitra river. The sovereignty of the Prince of Nitra was acknowledged by other Slovak principalities that extended along the Hron river country, the banks of the Váh and other Slovak lands. Under the rule of Prince Pribina belonged the Slovak principalities that lay to the east of the Small Carpathians.

The same sources tell us that Archbishop Adalram of Salzburg blessed a church on Pribina's land in Nitra. This consecration is proof that the Christianity spread by the German priests among the Slovaks already had taken firm root. Pribina's church in Nitra is the first Christian church on the territory of the western Slovans. While other Slavonic peoples in the eastern half of Europe still lived far off from western-European Christian culture and wandered in the darkness of paganism, the Slovak nation already in the beginning of the ninth century was counted among the Christian, the cultured nations of Europe.

At the time of the consecration of the Nitra church, in 833, Pribina himself was not yet a Christian. But the circumstance that Pribina allowed the Christian faith to be preached to his nation proves that the first Slovak ruler, even though he probably could not grasp the significance of Christian doctrine, nevertheless understood the political and cultural significance of Christianity on the Slavano-Germanic border. Pribina, a wise and prudent ruler, knew that a small nation at this dangerous crossroad could defend itself against its stronger neighbors only when it was equal to them culturally.

Not long afterwards, however, cruel calamity befell the ruler of Nitra. Prince **Mojmír**, who had united the Slovak tribes in the western part of the Slovak territory under his rule and who probably resided at Devín, drove Pribina out of Nitra and occupied his domain. Out of this union of Mojmir's country with Pribina's, there arose on the north bank of the Danube a state that united all the Slovak

tribes. The state, thus established about the year 830, was called Great Moravia (**Veľká Morava**) or the Great Moravian Empire (**Veľkomoravská ríša**).

Pribina, with his son **Koceľ** and a retinue of Slovak magnates, sought refuge in the neighboring Mark to the east, near the Danube. Markgrave Ratbod presented Pribina to King Louis the German. The latter had Pribina instructed in the Christian faith and baptized in St. Martin's church in the city of Treisma (probably the present city of Sankt Pölten in Germany). For a time Pribina and his group lived in the court of Markgrave Ratbod, but when the latter refused to aid him against Mojmir, he went to the Bulgars. However, he did not tarry there for long either, because soon after we find him seeking the aid of Ratimar, the Croatian Prince. At that time (about 838), Ratimar was not on good terms with Ratbod, so Pribina had to take refuge with Count Salach of Corutania. The latter succeeded in reconciling Pribina with Ratbod.

In exile Pribina convinced himself that he could not regain his lost domain and return to Nitra. He became reconciled with his fate and sought to gain the favor of King Louis the German. The latter entrusted to Pribina the new principality beyond the Danube, the country of Pannonia near Blatno. In 847 he became the independent ruler of this principality and built a formidable citadel there that was called Blatnohrad (Moosburg). After his baptism, Pribina became a zealous Christian and sought to convert all his subjects to Christianity. He invited German missionaries into his domain, built churches, endowed monasteries and often welcomed the archbishop of Salzburg at his court. In his work, Pribina had a zealous helper in the person of his son **Koceľ**. When Pribina died in 861 under mysterious circumstances, **Koceľ** inherited his principality. The Slovak nation, immediately with its first appearance on the stage of European history, entered the services of Christian culture. The Slovaks are the oldest nation on the central Danube and they were the first nation in Central Europe to have its own independent state. It is well to note that the Slovak State from its very inception was a Christian State.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE GREAT MORAVIAN EMPIRE

The studies of historians, philologists, and archeologists clearly indicate that the Great Moravian Empire was not the empire of the "Great Moravians," but the land of the ancient Slovaks who had settled on both sides of the Morava river. The Great Moravian Empire, then, was in reality a Great Slovak Empire, if we are to call the territory by the name of the people who had occupied it from the dawn of history. These studies refute the hypothesis of the Czech and non-Czech philologists, ethnographers, and historians, who claim that "Czechs and Slovaks of Bohemia, Moravia, and Northern Hungary (Slovakia) formed a single group with a common language."

Furthermore, these studies tell us that at first there were two estates or principalities in that area: the one called "Morava" was around the Morava up to the Váh with its capital city at Devín, while the other called "Nitra" — the capital city of which bore the same name — was around the Nitra river. When Mojmir, the ruler of Moravia, conquered Pribina, the ruler of Nitra, German chronicles began to call his empire "Magna Moravia," which meant the annexation of the Nitra principality to that of Moravia.

We also learn from these studies that the ancestors of the Czechs had settled in the land of the Boii (Bohemia; Behemia; Bohemia) just about at the same time that the Slovaks occupied the territory of the Morava river. Mojmir, Rastislav, and Svätopluk built the empire of the Slovaks, while Hostivít and Bořivoj built the state of the Czechs. The *Annales Francofuldenses* tell us that "Svätopluk extricated the Czech tribes from Frankish rule by force." Later the Czechs (Slavs of Bohemia) even joined the Germans to wage war against the Great Moravian Empire.

When Mojmir, some time in the year 836, drove Pribina out of Nitra and united the territory inhabited by Slovak tribes into a larger unit, there arose on the northern bank of the Danube an empire which the Byzantine em-



peror, Constantine Porphyrogennetos, in his work "About the Management of a State" (950), calls **Great Moravia**. Mojmir's empire stretched over the territory of present Slovakia and Moravia and was, after Samo's empire, the second Slovanic state near the Danube on the German-Slovanic border.

Just as Samo's Empire, so even the Great Moravian Empire had its origin at the same historic crossroad, because it was here that the greatest danger threatened the Slovanic peoples and they had to unite in defense of their freedom and independence. While Samo's empire arose because the Slovans along the Danube wanted to protect themselves against the enemies from the east, Great Moravia was established under pressure of danger from the west.

Mojmir, like Pribina, tried to live in peace with the neighboring Germans, because he knew that war with them could only end disastrously for the Slovaks. Mojmir was already a Christian, so the missionary activity of the German priests on the territory of Great Moravia went on unhampered. We must remember that Great Moravia at that time did not have any definite borders, because the borders of states of the Middle Ages never were defined strictly. The area of Great Moravia changed because the successors of Mojmir did undertake expeditions into neighboring countries, defeated them in battle and annexed them to the empire.

Louis the German did not relish the idea of a great, united Slovanic empire as a neighbor. In 846 he unseated Mojmir and replaced him with Rastislav. The latter simulated friendship for Louis, but knew well that the independence of his country was constantly threatened by the Germans. The independence of Great Moravia was threatened not only by German armies, but also by the missionary activity of the German priests, who had begun to look upon the territory as a part of the German empire. In about 860 Rastislav sent a special messenger to Pope Nicholas I in Rome with a request for missionaries who had a command of the Slovanic tongues. The Pope, however, answered he was sorry that he could not help Rastislav,

because at that time there were no such priests in Rome.

After due deliberation with his advisers, Rastislav decided to send a special mission to Constantinople, to Emperor Michael III. Rastislav's request, as presented to the Emperor, read: "Since our people has cast off paganism and follows the Christian law, we do not have such a teacher, who might explain the true Christian Faith to us in our own tongue, so that even other parties, witnessing this, might become like unto us. So send us, Emperor, such a bishop and teacher, because your country is everywhere recognized for its good laws."

Just about that time the German empire found strong allies in the Bulgarians, who bordered with Great Moravia at the Tisa river and lived in enmity with the Byzantine emperor. Michael did not have to deliberate long with his counsellors. He wanted Rastislav as an ally against the German-Bulgarian alliance and, hence, decided to aid the ruler of Great Moravia in his quest for missionaries who could speak the language of Rastislav's people. Up to this time the land of the Slovaks was subject to the influence of western culture only. Now it was to make contacts with the Christian culture of the European east.

#### SLOVAK APOSTLES: CYRIL AND METHODIUS

Emperor Michael of Constantinople decided to send Constantine (Cyril), the philosopher and linguist, and his brother Methodius, who was versed in the art of government, to preach the Gospel to the people of Rastislav. Constantine had distinguished himself in apostolic work before, at first alone and later with his brother Methodius. As natives of Salonica (Thessalonica) they were suited for the mission: they knew the language of Rastislav's people, the forefathers of the Slovaks. The Emperor, having summoned them, told the brothers: "You are from Salonica, and all Salonicans speak pure Slovenic."

Upon learning that Rastislav's people did not have their own script, the task of inventing one fell to the lot of Constantine. Legend has it that the alphabet worked out by Constantine (Cyril) had been revealed to him by God. It was quite an achievement. Constantine started with Greek

characters, but Slovanic sounds of the ninth century varied greatly with the Greek, therefore signs and characters had to be created to designate them. The alphabet that resulted is known as "Cyrillic."

After due preparation for their new mission, the brothers Constantine (Cyril) and Methodius set out for the country of Rastislav. They arrived in Rastislav's empire in 863 and began preaching the Word of God in the language of the people. Soon after the translation of the Scriptures and liturgical books was completed and presented to Rastislav's court at Devín. Naturally the saintly brothers gained many admirers and disciples. These catechists went among their people and aided Constantine and Methodius in their missionary work. Up to the time of the Slovak apostles, only three languages were considered feasible for ecclesiastic life, the Holy Scriptures and the Church liturgy: Hebrew, Latin and Greek. The latter two were used extensively—the Greek in the Byzantine (eastern) Church and Latin in the Roman (western) Church. Due to the efforts of Constantine and Methodius, the language of the Slovaks (early Slovanic) became the third language to be used in Church liturgy.

The work of Constantine and Methodius in Rastislav's empire was blessed with success. The saintly brothers united the people of Rastislav spiritually and also contributed handsomely to the material welfare of the Great Moravian Empire. Their disciples later spread the Gospel to other neighboring Slovanic nations (Czechs, Serbs, Russians) in a language that was for the most part understandable to all Slovanic nations.

The German clergy of Salzburg viewed the work of Constantine and Methodius with envy and accused the brothers of introducing dangerous innovations into the liturgy of the Church. A protest against their activities was lodged in Rome, and the brothers were summoned by Pope Nicholas (858—867) to vindicate themselves.

Constantine and Methodius set out for Rome in 867. Their journey led them through Lake Blatno (Balaton), the residence of Prince Kocel', Pribina's son. Kocel' received the brothers with great joy and examined their liturgical

books in the Slovanic script with great interest. Leaving Kocel', Constantine and Methodius passed through Corinthia to Venice on the Adriatic Sea. At Venice they successfully defended their use of the language of Rastislav's people in the liturgy of the Church, while the ecclesiastics there had to concede defeat in the debate.

While Constantine and Methodius made their way to Rome, Pope Nicholas died. Four days later his successor, Adrian II (867—872), was elected head of the Church. The saintly brothers were given a cordial reception by the Pope, and, after convincing a synod of bishops that they were not guilty of introducing any dangerous innovations into the liturgy of the Church, their activities were accorded Adrian's approval. The Holy Father accepted the liturgical books in the Slovanic language, blessed them on the altar of the church of St. Mary Major, and celebrated the Divine Liturgy over them himself. The Pope then proceeded to consecrate Constantine and Methodius as bishops. A number of their disciples (Clement, Gorazd, Angelar, Sava and Naum) were ordained to the priesthood by the bishops Formosus and Gaundenrich.

Shortly thereafter Constantine became seriously ill and retired to a monastery. There he joined the religious community, taking the name of Cyril. He died February 14, 869, and his earthly remains were buried on the right side of the high altar of the church of St. Clement in Rome.

After the death of Saint Cyril, the entire burden of spreading the Gospel and teaching of Christ rested on the shoulders of his brother. Methodius returned as archbishop and papal legate fully authorized to organize the Church in the land of Rastislav. Archbishop Methodius became the head of Slovanic Christendom. Besides receiving the highest ecclesiastical dignity, Methodius carried letters from the Pope for Rastislav of Great Moravia, Svätopluk of Nitra and Kocel' of Blatnohrad Castle (Moosburg), the three Slovak princes, which stated that the Pope permitted the use of Slovanic liturgy with the reservation that the epistle and gospel always be read in Latin before being read in the vernacular (Slovanic). The archdiocese of Methodius extended over Great Moravia and beyond the Danube over

Pannonia, uniting the lands governed by Slovak rulers. But as Methodius was returning to continue his apostolic work among the people of Rastislav, a new ruler was taking over the throne of Great Moravia.

#### KING SVÄTOPLUK

While Methodius was in Rome, the Germans continued to harass Rastislav. In 869 King Louis the German declared war against the neighboring Slovanic peoples and invaded their lands with his armies headed by his three sons. Prince Louis attacked the Lusatian Serbs, Charles went after Rastislav, and Carloman tore into the territory that was ruled by Rastislav's nephew, Svätopluk of Nitra. The German armies plundered and pillaged the Great Moravian Empire. But Rastislav's stronghold, the mighty Devín, proved impregnable and Rastislav's empire retained its independence.

The following year, however, Rastislav was betrayed by his own kinsman, his nephew Svätopluk, regent of Nitra. Success in battle had turned Svätopluk's head. The Germans played up to Svätopluk and promised to help him gain the throne of Great Moravia. Svätopluk decided to betray his uncle and vowed loyalty to Carloman. Rastislav, however, learned of the plot and became furious. Having vowed to punish his traitorous nephew, he ordered his men to do away with Svätopluk at a banquet, but their attempt to take and kill him failed. Soon thereafter Rastislav led his army against Svätopluk. In the ensuing battle, Rastislav was defeated. Worse than that, he was captured and handed over to the Germans. Carloman sent Rastislav bound in chains to Bavaria where King Louis the German imprisoned him and had his eyes gouged out. Rastislav died later as a prisoner of the Germans.

With Rastislav's defeat the Great Moravian Empire passed completely into the hands of the German crown. The Germans also seized Archbishop Methodius, who had returned from Rome, and imprisoned him. The Bavarian bishops, who regarded Methodius as a foreign intruder, made claims to the territories of the Slovanic peoples along the Danube and dealt with Methodius so inhumanely that Svätopluk himself intervened in his behalf. When Carlo-

man took possession of Rastislav's country and seized his royal treasures, he entrusted the rule of the ravaged country to Svätopluk.

Svätopluk soon proved himself a strong ruler. As a soldier he excelled in ruthless courage. The Germans began to distrust him, because they feared he would build an empire so strong as to imperil their country. Louis the German decided to put Svätopluk out of the way. In 871 the Germans succeeded in taking Svätopluk and imprisoned him. Some of his castles were taken over by the German Markgraves. Svätopluk denied the charge of Carloman that he plotted against the German crown, but that did not help him. When the Slovaks learned what had happened to their ruler, they elected Slavomír to take his place and rebelled against the Germans.

Slavomír was supported by the whole country. A terrible war followed. The Germans suffered heavy losses. Devín proved impregnable to their attacks. In the meantime, the wily Svätopluk was plotting to even matters with the Germans who had tricked him. While in prison he repented his betrayal of Rastislav and vowed to even the score with his German captors.

Svätopluk begged Carloman to release him so that he might subdue the Slovaks under Slavomír. Carloman was reluctant at first, but finally gave in to Svätopluk's pleadings. Accompanying a large German army, Svätopluk soon found himself below the mighty fortress of Devín. While the German army encamped quietly below the citadel, Svätopluk set out with a small detachment of men to the castle to persuade Slavomír to surrender without a battle. Once inside the castle, Svätopluk disclosed his plan to Slavomír. Assuming command of the Slovak army, Svätopluk tore out of the courtyard and attacked the Germans with such savagery that only few were able to escape alive. Carloman's army was caught unawares and crushed.

Svätopluk knew that the Germans would come after him sooner or later. He looked around for allies. That same year (871), he married the sister of Bořivoj, ruler of the Bohemian land, and formed an alliance with him. Svätopluk pressed the offensive against the Germans and was quite



successful. In 873 he defeated Carloman decisively. Carloman asked his father Louis for help to fight the Slovaks. When aid was not forthcoming, Carloman decided to seek a truce with Svätopluk. He signed a pact with Svätopluk at Forsheim in 874 and recognized the independence of the Great Moravian Empire. Svätopluk had reached the pinnacle of his ambitions: he was sole ruler of the Great Moravian Empire, with its capital at Devín near Bratislava.

(Continued)

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### 1856 — DR. SAMUEL CZAMBEL — 1956

P. A. HROBAK

The year 1956 marks not only the centennial of the death of the great Slovak fighter for freedom and democracy, Dr. Louis Štúr, but it is also the centennial of the birth of the eminent Slovak philologist, Samuel Czambel.

Czambel was born September 1, 1856, in the town of Slovenská Lupča, Zvolen County, Slovakia. The study of his native Slovak language attracted him early in his life and he devoted much of his adult life to it. He died in Budapest, December 18, 1909.

In 1887, Czambel wrote his Contributions to the History of the Slovak Language ("Príspevky k dejinám jazyka slovenského"); he followed this with his Slovak Orthography ("Slovenský pravopis") in 1890; A Manual of the Literary Slovak Language ("Rukoväť spisovnej reči slovenskej") in 1902; The Slovaks and Their Language ("Slováci a ich reč") in 1903; and The Slovak Language and its Place in the Family of Slavic Languages ("Slovenská reč a jej miesto v rodine slovanských jazykov"), 624 pp., in 1906. Of course, Czambel contributed many other articles on Slovak subjects to Slovak newspapers, periodical reviews and magazines.

Czambel's "Rukoväť (Slovak Grammar), revised and modified several times since its first edition by the late Dr. Joseph Škultéty, is a standard work with philologists, grammarians, and students of Slovak. In his "Slováci a ich reč," Czambel promoted the theory that the Slovaks were very closely related to the Croatians, Slovenes and Serbs

(Yugoslavs); this, of course, was disproved by the studies of Škultéty and Pastrnek. In his last work, relating to the Slovak language and other Slovanic languages, Czambel systematically dealt with Slovak dialects, beginning with the eastern. He had intended to add several volumes to show the relationship between the other Slovanic languages and the Slovak — to the preparation of which he had devoted years of study — but, unfortunately, ill-health and death overtook Czambel before he could complete the planned monumental philological work.

Because Samuel Czambel was employed as an official in a Magyar ministry, and because he had written a brochure in Magyar (1902) — even though in favor of the Slovak language — he was accused by some writers of being a Magyarone. The truth is, however, that those writers were more influenced by the fact that Czambel refused to accept the “Czecho-Slovak” theory about the “unity” of the Slovaks and Czechs than they were by his Magyar brochure.

In regard to that Magyar brochure, Dr. Joseph Škultéty, the grand old defender of Slovak history, philology and culture, had this to say in the “Slovenské Pohľady” (1923):

“We saw no reason why we should write against this Magyar brochure. Were we supposed to write against its author because he wanted to have a clean, genuine Slovak language? Or because he wanted to aid it wherever it needed it? That here ‘in politics’ he goes a bit too far, well, that is his business; Dr. Czambel always stood out so individually that we have no right to concern ourselves about him.”

Objective observers will not deny that Czambel did serve the Slovak cause; he did not serve Magyarism or Magyarization as a jobholder in the Magyar ministry, or with his linguistic theory and his patriotic Slovak verses. In spirit Czambel was Slovak, even though he did study in Vienna and Prague. But a Slovak intellectual could not easily get the kind of work he prepared for in Hungary. Czambel's father, as a Justice of the Peace in Slovenská Lupča, was an acquaintance of Bela Grünwald, who was

first the Vice-Commissar of Zvolen County and then a member of the Hungarian Diet. It was Grünwald who placed young Czambel in the press bureau of the Premier at Budín. And Grünwald, we know, was for some 25 years the greatest oppressor of the Slovaks in Hungary. We can imagine then what it meant to a young Slovak patriot to have his protection. Because of that, however, young Czambel did not become a Magyarone, but devoted himself to the study of his people and their language.

In 1890, Czambel was persuaded to write for the "Slovenské Pohľady" (Slovak Review); of course, holding a job under the Magyars, he could not write under his own name. When he published his book, "Slováci a ich reč" in 1903, presenting the theory that the Slovaks were a Yugoslav tribe, Czambel was severely criticized by the "Národné Noviny" and the "Slovenské Pohľady," which proved him wrong and condemned him. Informed persons, however, knew that Czambel proposed the Yugoslav theory not because of convictions, but rather as a matter of tactics: it was only thus that he could keep his state job.

Samuel Czambel definitely proved that man does not live by bread alone. Suspected as a Magyarone by some of his own people, and as a Pan-Slav by the Magyars, Samuel Czambel nevertheless rendered a great service to his people by his literary efforts. His grammar of the Slovak language is still the best, according to Slovak philologists.

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#### CASTLES OF SLOVAKIA

### STAROHRAD (THE OLD CASTLE) OF LIPTOV

The village of Liptovská Teplá in Slovakia lies east of the city of Ružomberok. Not far from the village we find the mineral springs called Lúčky. Traveling by train from Ružomberok to Lúčky we see the mighty rocky cliffs of the Sielnica fortress, which is almost as high as Sitno. On these rocky cliffs can still be seen the remnants of the once mighty Old Castle (Starohrad). It is accessible from the valley of Sestrča; at one time it served as a guard for the highway that led from Liptov to Orava.

In the fourteenth century Starohrad was the proper-

ty of Donč; in the fifteenth it belonged to Pankráč of Lip-tovský Svätý Mikuláš and then to Peter Komorovský. The county administrators resided there. In 1433 Starohrad was taken by the Czech Hussites who came from Bohemia to ravage and plunder Slovakia. King Mathias took the castle from Komorovský and had it completely destroyed in 1474. Little remains of the ruins today, but Starohrad lives on in many legends.

The brook called Sestrča separates the fortress of Sielnica, with its historical Starohrad, from the mighty cliff of Žipov; with the passage of years it cut a narrow but deep valley. People say that when King Mathias besieged Starohrad, his army encamped on Žipov, cannonaded Starohrad with such force that the walls gave in. One of the cannon balls, the story goes, flew all the way to Sielnica, and since that time the inhabitants of Sielnica claim the entire cliff as their property, even though they are separated from it by three communities.

People of the community of St. Ann also have preserved a legend about Starohrad. They say that Starohrad was at one time besieged by unknown enemies, who were as numerous as flies, so that one could not even see a blade of grass on the slope beneath the castle. Try as they might, however, they could not take the castle. That is, at least, not until love prompted treason. People say that the daughter of Starohrad's owner fell in love with one of the knights of the besieging army and one night threw him the keys to the main gate. And that is the way the enemy was able to get into the courtyard of the castle.

The lord of the castle, however, as is always the case in such legends, was prepared for such an eventuality. He and his family escaped through an underground passage. It was only after they were safe from the enemy that the lord learned that the castle was betrayed by his own daughter. Thereupon he flew into a great rage and cursed her. And a father's curse is never without effect. The unfortunate girl wandered about the ruins of Starohrad for seven years, longingly awaiting her liberation. The people of the vicinity, however, would have nothing to do with her and kept their distance from her. Well, it so happened that

a certain shepherd finally did get up enough courage to talk to the cursed girl.

She begged him to help her and liberate her from the infinite sufferings. The shepherd promised that he would come to the same spot the very next day and when she appears in the form of a pig, he would snatch the golden keys from her snout. She in turn promised him to reveal the spot on Starohrad where her father had concealed a great treasure when he was attacked by the enemy, which would be his reward.

The shepherd did as he had promised. He came to the spot, but when a pig did make its appearance, fear overcame him and he began to shake all over. The pig was so ugly that he took to flight. The pig, however, ran after him. In terror the shepherd shouted: "Would to God that you would vanish!" Right then and there the apparition stopped and said "Now you did it; you cursed me even more." And with that the girl did vanish, leaving not a single trace behind herself.

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#### WHO SAID IT?

"Let me be allowed to point to the example given by Dr. H. Ripka. . . . It was no accident that he was entrusted with the leadership of our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, that he was entrusted with the care of our foreign press and radio, that he was entrusted to negotiate an agreement of our alliance with the Soviet Union, that he was the head of practically all negotiations by which the foundation was placed for the greatest success of our national revolution, the transfer of Germans from our lands. And neither was it an accident, but it emanated from the stand of our brethren, that it was a National Socialist who was unanimously elected as president of the State Council of our parliament abroad, that a National Socialist was the Chairman of the British-Czechoslovak Friendship Society, that a National Socialist was the Chairman of the Society to cultivate cultural and economical contacts with the USSR." — (J. Firt, a Beneš Czech, in the SVOBODNÉ SLOVO, 3-2-47).

## Kerner's "Czechoslovakia" (Cont'd.)

### HISTORY OR PROPAGANDA?

P. A. HROBAK

"With the formation of the Czecho-Slovak State, the Germans refused to accept the new situation and to cooperate with the new government at Prague" (p. 177).

But the fact is that even though they were forced to accept the situation, on various occasions the Sudetenlanders showed their willingness to cooperate with Prague, but the Czechs were not disposed to cooperate. "The Germans, reduced from the position of dominance to that of a minority, naturally resented the new setup," Roucek tells us, which is true, but the entire blame for the bad blood between the Czechs and the Germans, could hardly be placed on the latter, as Roucek would have us do. Masaryk and Beneš and their followers were responsible for what happened in and to Czecho-Slovakia, because they practically ran the whole show.

"But why did the **Czechs** ask that this hostile element be included in their state? In the memorandum which the **Czechs** submitted to the Peace Conference, they claimed the **historic** frontiers of Bohemia. **All history** showed, they argued, and economic and strategic considerations demanded, that the historic Lands of the Bohemian Crown should remain a single unit. The exclusion of the Sudete areas would have broken the virtually indissoluble geographical and economic ties with central Bohemia. The Germans of Bohemia desired to be united with the new Austrian Republic and not with the Reich. The areas settled by the Germans were never, of themselves, component parts of the German Reich nor were they independent elements in the former Austria-Hungary. So far as these territories were connected constitutionally with the Holy Roman Empire, they were connected solely as part and parcel of the **Czech State**, consisting of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown, and only as an entity with those Lands." — (p. 178).

Roucek's tendency is obvious: the Czechs had a claim, but the Germans did not. Bohemia, we know, was an independent kingdom until 1526; the Germans were no less a part of it than were the Czechs. Roucek, however, tells us that the territories settled by the Germans "were connected solely as part and parcel of the "**CZECH**" State and not the **BOHEMIAN** Crown lands. What Beneš and Masaryk submitted to the Peace Conference to back their "claims" to the his-



toric frontiers of Bohemia is one thing, but the truth is something else. Roucek apparently preferred not to deal with the latter. For his edification, I quote Robert Ingram, eminent journalist and author, who says that:

... before Huss's reformation, Bohemia had been the scene of the most felicitous Czech-German cooperation. Of this, Prague, one of the most magnificent cities in Europe, is still a living witness. It must be added that in those dark times, when people had not yet learned to regard another language as a symptom of inferiority, no one spoke of Czechs or Germans. They were just Bohemians. This explains why no two other races have more similarity than Czechs and Sudeten Germans. There was perpetual intermarriage and it became, in the towns, purely accidental whether a family considered itself German or Czech. The race which profited most by this close community were the Czechs because the Germans had an older and more highly developed culture and could draw from the great receptacle of the Germanies. The Czechs as part and parcel of the Holy Roman Empire became entirely different from Slavic peoples outside." ("After Hitler Stalin?" — 1946 — Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, Wis.; pp. 54-55).

It is significant that Roucek did not include the works of such eminent historians as C. A. Macartney and A. J. P. Taylor, which shed much light on Bohemia and the Habsburg Empire. Macartney, for example, says that Bohemia did "become a member of the German Reich," whereas Roucek claims that "the areas settled by the Germans were never, **of themselves**, component parts of the German Reich," which is a tricky way of putting it, to say the least. How many students and teachers of history, using Kerner's "Czechoslovakia," noticed or paid any attention to Roucek's "**of themselves**," and if some did, what did they make of it? What real claim did Masaryk and Beneš have to the 3,231,688 Germans of Bohemia, the figure mentioned by Roucek (p. 178)?

Furthermore, according to Roucek:

"The whole problem of the Sudete Germans was a counter in the game of power politics and a part of the larger problem of Germany in Europe. It was not a debate between the 11,000,000 Czecho-Slovaks and the 75,000,000 Germans concerning the treatment of Germans in Czecho-Slovakia, or the frontiers of that Republic, or of the destiny of the national fragments which remained outside the German borders. It was a question of the desire of Germany to establish a new empire" (p. 182).

Now this may have been the desire of Hitler after he came to power. But why should Roucek consider the Sudete

problem only from this angle? The situation in 1938 may have been as described, but what the Sudeten Germans themselves had to say about their treatment at the hands of the Czechs from 1918 to 1938 is not at all worth mentioning by Roucek. Furthermore, the debate certainly did not concern **"11,000,000 Czecho-Slovaks,"** as Roucek would have us believe. **The Slovaks had nothing to do with it;** foreign policy was dominated by Beneš and the Czechs.

The Slovaks, we know, had their own arguments with the Czechs. The Czechs under Masaryk and Beneš were on one side, while the non-Czech nationalities — **the majority of the population of Czecho-Slovakia** — were on the opposite side. The demands of these non-Czech nations may have been, as Roucek says, "incompatible with the fundamental principles of democracy as understood and practiced in Czecho-Slovakia," nevertheless they were not incompatible with natural rights and the fundamental principles of democracy as understood and practiced in genuinely democratic countries.

The simple truth is that the Czechs, especially the Masaryk-Beneš Czechs, did not learn the lesson of Austria-Hungary. They followed Masaryk and Beneš blindly, ruling high and mighty over the non-Czech nations, in the fashion of Stalin and Hitler.

"The problem of nationalism played no part in Slovakia up to the end of the eighteenth century because the official language of Hungary was Latin" (p. 183).

Following this line of reasoning, then, nationalism played no part in any country, at any time, whenever the **official** language of a country was any other than that of the inhabitants. Does professor Roucek really believe that? Writing about the period of Joseph II, when "Bohemian politics of the nineteenth century received their first rehearsal," A. J. P. Taylor says in his "The Habsburg Monarchy":

Even in Bohemia the imperial nobility, which had been imported by the Habsburgs, cloaked their hostility to social reform in a display of Bohemian patriotism, and in the ante-rooms of the Habsburg the descendants of German, Scottish, or Spanish adventurers ostentatiously exchanged a few words of **CZECH** which they had laboriously learnt from their stable-boys" (pp. 19-20).

This relates to the time that Roucek writes about (Joseph died in 1790). What then was the **official language** of Bohemia, or of the Habsburg Empire up to the end of the eighteenth century?

"The Slovaks were not considered as a minority by Prague, and certainly not by the Slovaks themselves. This is attested to by the fact that the Czech parties had their adherents in Slovakia, that there was no discrimination against the inclusion of Slovaks in various cabinets, and that Dr. Milan Hodža, a member of the Republican Party and a Slovak, headed the cabinets from 1935 to 1938" (p. 184).

If the Slovaks were not considered "as a minority" by Prague, what were they considered? An equal partner, a colony, a branch of the Czech nation? What does Roucek's "attestation" prove? What were **CZECH** parties doing in Slovakia? Does not Roucek know that the Slovaks selected by Masaryk and Beneš for cabinet or other posts did not represent the will of the vast masses of the Slovak people? We remember that Judas was one of the apostles, too. Masaryk and Beneš could hardly make the new-born Republic appear "Czecho-Slovak" without including several Slovaks in their cabinets. **But those Slovaks knew that they had to serve the interests of Masaryk and Beneš, the interests of the Czechs, if they wanted to keep their posts.** Every one of them repudiated the right of their own nation to freedom and political independence, nay, even autonomy (states' rights). What kind of Slovaks were they, if not "Judas" Slovaks? Dr. Milan Hodža was a smart politician; he knew what was best for Milan Hodža. He served Masaryk and Beneš well for decades, but, in the end, was made the scapegoat of Munich, being discarded by Beneš, as were so many other Slovaks and Czechs who got out of line with the policies of Masaryk and Beneš. (Pergler, Stříbrný, Beran, Osuský, etc.).

"The autonomist tendencies of the Catholic Slovaks found their expression, however, in the Slovak Populist Party of Father Andrej Hlinka, whose policies can be understood best when we recall the demands for states' rights in the United States which culminated in the Civil War" (p. 184).

Roucek, however, omitted to mention that Hlinka was joined in "the autonomist tendencies" by the Lutheran minister and poet, Martin Rázus, Slovak patriot and head of

the Slovak National Party. Biased historians propagate the idea that only the Slovak **Catholics** fought for autonomy (states' rights) in Slovakia.

What does Mr. Roucek mean when he says that Hlinka's policies **"can be understood best when we recall the demands for states' rights in the United States which culminated in the Civil War"**? In the first place, does it make sense to compare the relationship between the individual 48 States to the United States and the relationship of Slovakia to Czecho-Slovakia? Demands by how many states and for what states' rights culminated in the Civil War? Do not the States comprising the United States have their rights defined and secured by the Constitution of the U. S. A.? What states' rights did Slovakia have guaranteed and secured by the Czecho-Slovak Constitution of Masaryk and Beneš, which, in fact, even denied the existence of the Slovak nation? Or is it possible that Mr. Roucek wants us to believe that Hlinka's policies advocated slavery? It is quite obvious that Roucek did not know Hlinka and his policies!

"The Czechs and the Slovaks had been separated politically for one thousand years. The former had become very largely industrialized, **influenced by German and Western thought and technical development.** The Slovaks, on the contrary, remained agriculturists and under a Magyar (that is, **Eastern**) type of culture. The Czechs were nominally Roman Catholics, and those who opposed Roman Catholicism during their national struggle against the Catholic Habsburgs had earned the reputation in the eyes of devout Slovaks of being **irreligious**" (pp. 184-185).

Roucek and other pro-Czech historians like to dwell on the theme that the Czechs and Slovaks were "separated politically for one thousand years," but somehow always forget to tell when and under what conditions the Czechs and Slovaks were ever united politically or otherwise. They also favor the theme that the Czechs were "largely industrialized," while the Slovaks "remained agriculturists," but never have an explanation for the fact that Slovakia was more industrialized under the Magyars of Hungary than it was under Masaryk and Beneš of Czecho-Slovakia. The tendency is only too obvious!

The Czechs, it is true, did not fare badly under the Germans (Austria); the Slovaks suffered incomparably greater

political and economic oppression under the Magyars of Hungary. The culture of the Slovaks, however, was not **"Magyar (that is, Eastern),"** as Roucek maintains. The Slovaks evidently knew the Czechs better than Roucek did. Many Czechs were undoubtedly "nominally Roman Catholics," but many times many more became so-called "progressive" Roman Catholics, having succumbed to the influence of Huss, Palacký, Rieger, Havlíček, Masaryk and Beneš. The Slovaks did not consider the Czechs "irreligious" because they fought against the "Catholic Habsburgs," but rather because they repudiated the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and deeply insulted the religious feelings of the Slovak people by destroying religious monuments, removing crucifixes from classrooms, etc., soon after Masaryk and Beneš took over the reins of the Czecho-Slovak State.

Roucek may not like to admit it, nevertheless the possibility does exist that the Slovaks could have regarded the Czechs as "irreligious" also for denying the existence of the Slovak nation and its inherent and God-given right to freedom and political independence. Or is it possible that Roucek believes that recognition of and respect for the natural rights of nations does not come under the title of religion?

"Whereas the standard of literacy among the Czechs was high, the percentage of Slovaks who could read and write was very low in 1919. For that reason, many officials, teachers, and intellectuals from the Czech regions had to be sent to Slovakia in 1918-1919, and many of them antagonized the Slovaks with their **well-intentioned, but often too matter-of-fact, methods** . . . When, during the course of time, Slovaks became available, it was not easy to dismiss the Czechs, many of whom had married and settled down" (p. 185).

By what standards or statistics professor Roucek was influenced, I do not know, but I honestly believe that his statement regarding the literacy of the Slovaks in 1919 is highly exaggerated. **How low is very low?** What were the **"well-intentioned, but often too matter-of-fact, methods"** of Czech intellectuals which antagonized the Slovaks? Is it not significant that Roucek has no sympathy for the many Slovaks who, during the course of time, did become available, got married and had children, but could hardly settle down in their own homeland, because the jobs they had been trained for were taken by Czechs? R. W. Seton-Watson, the

Czech propagandist, admits much more in his "The New Slovakia" (Fr. Borový, Prague; 1924); I heartily recommend it to Roucek and to all readers of Kerner's "Czechoslovakia." The fact is that Prague sent about 110,000 Czechs to Slovakia to do jobs which the Slovaks themselves could have done easily and effectively.

Roucek asks "what was the Pittsburgh Agreement?" and then answers the typical Masaryk-Beneš way, using Ivan Dérer's (the Judas Slovak) "The Unity of the Czechs and Slovaks" (Prague, 1938) and Beneš's "Central European Observer" (Dec. 16, 1938) as his "catechisms"! It is evident that Roucek never even saw a copy of the original, because he dates the Pittsburgh Agreement **June 30, 1918**, instead of May 30, 1918, the same mistake made by other Czech propagandists, including T. G. Masaryk (*Světová Revoluce*, p. 262) and professor S. Harrison Thomson of the University of Colorado, author of "Czechoslovakia in European History" (Princeton University Press, 1953) and editor of the "Journal of Central European Affairs." Roucek does not produce the full text of the Pittsburgh Agreement, but simply states:

"These American Czechs and Slovaks, together with Dr. Masaryk, agreed that Slovakia should 'have her own administrative system, her own diet and her own courts, (and that) the Slovak language should be the official language in the schools, in the public offices and public affairs generally'. Actually the points in agreement were virtually carried out — except the one stipulating the setting up of a diet for Slovakia."

Roucek, however, does not tell the whole story about the Pittsburgh Agreement. By presenting only the Czech side and omitting the Slovak side of it, he proves himself partial and prejudiced. Without the support of the Slovaks, T. G. Masaryk knew that his proposed "Czecho-Slovakia" was doomed. There was no way of contacting the Slovaks at home (in Hungary at that time), hence he came to the United States to seek the support of Americans of Slovak descent; also the support of Americans of Czech descent, since the Czechs at home did not react favorably to Masaryk's plan to destroy Austria-Hungary and to establish Czecho-Slovakia.

The weightiest objection to Masaryk's plan was that



about six and a half million Czechs would hardly make a state fit to live, even if they were allowed to swallow three and a half million Germans in order to obtain the historical frontiers of the Bohemian kingdom. To meet this argument, Robert Ingram tells us ("After Hitler Stalin" — p. 80):

"Masaryk invented the fiction that the Czechs and Slovaks were the same, that is Czecho-Slovaks, thus claiming a large part of Hungary for his new state. As this discovery failed to impress the Allies, he enlisted the support of the Americans of Slovakian descent. Disliking the Magyars, who . . . had not given them a fair deal, they favored the idea of separating Slovakia from Hungary. But sufficiently history conscious, they rejected emphatically the theory of the Czecho-Slovak race."

Americans of Slovak descent did not put much trust in Masaryk's oral pronouncements and promises. They remembered that the Magyars had made quite a few promises to the Slovaks and never kept them. When Masaryk came to America to gain the support of the citizens of Slovak descent, the latter insisted on a **written guarantee** that Slovakia would enjoy full autonomy (states' rights) within the proposed Czecho-Slovakian republic. The result was the Pittsburgh Agreement or Convention which Masaryk drafted and signed during a meeting of representatives of Slovak and Czech organizations at Pittsburgh, Pa., May 30, 1918. Masaryk, however, repudiated it soon after he and Beneš took over the reins of the Czecho-Slovak State. To refute Slovakia's claim for autonomy, Masaryk wrote in 1925:

"It (the Pittsburgh Convention) was concluded in order to appease a small Slovak fraction which was dreaming of God knows what sort of independence for Slovakia . . . I signed the agreement unhesitatingly because it was a **local agreement of American Czechs and Slovaks between themselves**" (SVĚTOVÁ REVOLUCE, p. 262).

To attain a "Czecho-Slovak" majority in the proposed Czecho-Slovak Republic T. G. Masaryk did not hesitate to resort to falsehood and dishonesty. How else can we explain his preposterous statement that the Pittsburgh Agreement was only a **"local agreement of American Czechs and Slovaks between themselves"**!

What need did American Czechs and Slovaks have for such an agreement? And if Masaryk actually did think it was only a "local agreement" between Americans, why did he, a foreigner, even consider drafting and signing it? He con-

cluded the agreement, he says, "in order to appease a **small SLOVAK fraction** which was dreaming of God knows what sort of independence for Slovakia," but the fact is that the Slovaks at that Pittsburgh meeting represented an overwhelming majority of organized Slovaks in America. And what sort of independence for Slovakia could they possibly be dreaming of **when Masaryk himself told them that Czecho-Slovakia would be modeled after the United States or Switzerland?**

In 1918, T. G. Masaryk presented the Pittsburgh Convention to President Woodrow Wilson as a solemn treaty between the Slovaks and the Czechs to induce him to grant official recognition to the Czech and Slovak union and its provisional government. Wilson would hardly have been charmed by Masaryk to destroy Austria if Masaryk had described the Pittsburgh convention, in 1918, in the disparaging terms he set in the record in 1925. The "great" Masaryk, who so persistently insisted on the truth in all things, obviously lied to President Wilson and the Slovaks!

By saying that **"actually the points in agreement were virtually carried out — except the one stipulating the setting up of a diet for Slovakia,"** professor Roucek admits that he does not know what went on in Czecho-Slovakia and, hence, is hardly qualified to write with authority about that country, and especially the Slovak portion of it. The fact is that the Masaryk and Beneš regimes were deaf to the just demand of the Slovaks that the Pittsburgh Convention be honored by the Constitution of the Czecho-Slovak Republic and, hence, both were responsible for the consequences. The relations between the Czechs and the Slovaks were actually worse in 1938 than they were in 1918.

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